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Cover picture: The Illustrated Police News artist's impression of Joseph Morris shooting his wife while she was doing the washing-up, reproduced from *Victorian Delights: Reflections of taste in the nineteenth century*, 180 illustrations with commentary by John Hadfield (128pp, Herbert, £12.95, 0-90699-689-9).

# Taking the plunge into independence

Wm. Roger Louis

SHAHID HAMID  
*Disastrous Twilight*: A personal record of the partition of India 364pp. Leo Cooper/Secker and Warburg. £17.50.  
0436 19077 X  
R. J. MOORE  
*Making the New Commonwealth* 218pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £25.  
0198201125

The flames of controversy still blaze forty years after India's partition, not merely in scholarly circles but among all those who hold strong views about the end of the British era in India, whether seeing it as a catastrophe or as a glorious new beginning. Shahid Hamid's *Disastrous Twilight* is a sustained attack on Lord Mountbatten, who as Viceroy in 1947 presided over the division of the subcontinent. "Mountbatten, and Mountbatten alone, will have the blood of all these innocent people on his hands", Hamid wrote in June 1947, anticipating the mass slaughter in the Punjab two months later. R. J. Moore's *Making the New Commonwealth* is a scholarly assessment of the consequences of partition and of the creative effort to salvage the smouldering remnants of the British Raj. The British attempted to remain neutral in what Moore describes as "the communal holocaust" of Sikhs and Muslims. Virtually by an act of will the Labour Government managed to reconstruct out of the rubble the new Commonwealth, which, in Moore's judgment, has become Britain's "greatest contribution to civilization".

Hamid was an Indian Army officer who in March 1946 became private secretary to Sir Claude Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army. Auchinleck is the hero of *Disastrous Twilight*, Mountbatten the villain. "He is flirting with the Congress leaders", Hamid wrote about Mountbatten when the latter passed through Delhi while still Supreme Allied Commander South-East Asia, some nine months before he became Viceroy. At the same time, May 1946, Auchinleck rose to the rank of Field Marshal. Hamid served with him until August 1947 and remained in close contact until December, the crucial months in the aftermath of partition. He kept a diary, which forms the substance of *Disastrous Twilight*. He patiently recorded the straightforward, honourable and courageous impulses of Auchinleck, and, in his own words, the "devious", "ignoble", "sinister" motives of Mountbatten. This, then, is a highly subjective account. It is nevertheless a useful and revealing one.

*Disastrous Twilight* helps to restore perspective on Auchinleck. Hamid, accurately reflecting popular sentiment, describes him as the embodiment of the Indian Army before its dissolution by Mountbatten in August 1947. "He is more Indian than British", Hamid noted in 1946. "His lasting achievement will always be the creation of a genuinely Indian Army." There is much to be said for this point of view. "The Auk" was not only one of Britain's greatest soldiers; he was also one of the truly distinguished military commanders of the Second World War. He was a soldier's soldier, always most at ease with his troops, living with them, eating the same food, sleeping on the ground, setting an example of camaraderie, dignity and courage by his own conduct. In the old Indian Army there was unquestionably greater affection for him than for any other commander. Unlike Mountbatten, Auchinleck believed that a "recording angel" would establish his place in history and thus that he had no need to defend or explain his actions.

In an elegant and incisive introduction to *Disastrous Twilight*, Philip Ziegler points out that Hamid's account is valuable not only for its coherence, but also because it represents a radically different interpretation from the one that has predominated in Britain (and, one might add, in the United States). In view of Ziegler's own recent biography, *Mountbatten* (reviewed in the TLS of April 12, 1985), which in essentials is contradicted by Hamid's strictures, this is a generous statement in the service of historical scholarship. The diary is internally consistent and transparently honest. There is much more at stake here than the reputation of Auchinleck as an honourable soldier attempt-

ing to maintain the unity of India and to prevent the division of the Indian Army, or the portrayal of Mountbatten as a tricky politician who becomes little more than a puppet manipulated by leaders of the Indian National Congress, Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel. These are simplistic views, and the immensely complicated problem of India's partition cannot be reduced to personalities. But Hamid's interpretation leads to an issue of genuine historical controversy. Auchinleck believed that the Indian Army, and if necessary British troops, could have been used to prevent or at least ameliorate the massacres in the Punjab. In Auchinleck's view, Mountbatten's decision to leave precipitately in August 1947 — in effect to scuttle — was a calamitous and unnecessary mistake. Mountbatten, then and for ever after, held that quick departure was necessary to prevent an even greater explosion.



Sculpture on the outer wall of a house in the city of Janmangar, Gujarat; reproduced from India by Antonio Morrey (287pp, Orbis, 0-85613-946-7).

Seldom have the two conflicting interpretations been so sharply drawn. Hamid goes for the jugular in his indictment of Mountbatten. He wrote in March 1947, a few days after Mountbatten's advent as Viceroy:

Soon after the arrival of Mountbatten there was a point of disagreement between him and the Auk. The latter maintained that in order to uphold British prestige, British troops must be used to save lives. The Provinces were continuously demanding them for internal security duties.

Mountbatten, however, was of the opinion that they must be sent away before the date of handing over. Behind this he had a sinister motive. He thought that their withdrawal would help in keeping both India and Pakistan in the Commonwealth as the two countries would not be too confident of their defence capabilities and probably bank on His Majesty's Government's assistance. Besides he was frightened of being blamed for any action the British troops may take in putting down disturbances.

The quotation is a good example of the subjective and objective quality of the diary. Mountbatten was supremely self-confident. It is grotesque to describe him as frightened or lacking in nerve. Nevertheless Hamid was on to something when he pondered the military consequences of partition. As Moore substantiates in his new book, both India and Pakistan feared that leaving the Commonwealth would give military advantage to the other.

"Why this hurry?" Hamid asked, after Mountbatten's announcement that power would be transferred on August 15, 1947. "Why this shock treatment? What is at the back of it?" Those questions led to even more fundamental ones: "Why is he 'bulldozing' everything and leaving no time for an organized handover? Does he not realize that things done in such a desperate hurry can lead to chaos, confusion and shambles?" And lastly, "Is he trying to show the world that he has succeeded in finding a solution and has man-

aged to keep the two States in the Commonwealth?" On the ethics of the Viceroy's determination to leave quickly and decisively, *Disastrous Twilight* is unequivocal: "I think he is prepared to accept bloodshed and human misery." "Sheer irresponsibility" was the phrase Hamid used to sum up Mountbatten's headlong plunge into Indian independence. There is nothing said in the Viceroy's defence. But what does emerge clearly (and it can be verified independently in the Auchinleck Papers at the Rylands Library at the University of Manchester) is that Auchinleck would have pursued a slower and steadier pace, and that he would have deployed troops from the British as well as the Indian Army to try to keep the peace. In the event his counsel was ignored.

The Viceroy had a poor opinion of the Field Marshal's political judgment. "Mountbatten is reported to have said", Hamid wrote, "that the Auk lacks political sense!" It must be said that

In perhaps the most controversial part of *Disastrous Twilight*, Hamid sustains the frequent accusation that Mountbatten intervened in the boundary award to Pakistan and India, to the latter's advantage. Specifically, so runs the indictment, Mountbatten persuaded Sir Cyril Radcliffe, the boundary commissioner, to alter the boundary of the Gurdaspur district of the Punjab to provide India with a strategic corridor to Kashmir. Without such access by land, Kashmir might not have gone to India. In Hamid's view, the Kashmir dispute would have been avoided at the outset by Kashmir acceding to Pakistan, for legitimate demographic, ethnic, religious and geographical reasons.

The evidence adduced by Hamid to prove the point of Viceroyal interference is a provisional sketch-map sent, a few days before the award, by Radcliffe to Sir Evan Jenkins, the Governor of Punjab. It was later discovered in his safe by his successor, Sir Francis Mudie, who became Governor of West Punjab in the new state of Pakistan. The sketch-map indicated a line favourable to Pakistan, denying the Gurdaspur corridor to India. Before the actual award, the map was altered — according to Hamid, because of the Viceroy's wish to appease Nehru. The award itself ended the critical corridor to India, his complicity cannot thus far be proved. Nevertheless a sceptical mind cannot but ask whether Mountbatten might have skillfully covered his tracks.

One of the opening chapters of *Making the New Commonwealth* examines the Gurdaspur dispute in detail. Moore is a cautious historian whose writings are dispassionate and judicious. He notes that Mountbatten once remarked that Kashmir might go either way, but that if it were to become part of India, then the eastern part of Gurdaspur, in effect the corridor, would have to be awarded to India. Moore thus sets the stage for historical detective work. Did Mountbatten in fact intervene? What of Radcliffe and his motives? What weight should be given to the sketch-map? What of its recipient, Sir Evan Jenkins? In view of the importance of the Kashmir issue both for India and Pakistan and as a historic problem before the United Nations and in world politics, Moore's answers are of considerable interest.

The evidence seems to lead away from convicting Mountbatten, though it does not especially enhance his reputation for integrity. One of the members of his staff, W. H. J. Christie, noted on August 9, 1947 (several days before the boundary award), that the Viceroy was "having to be strenuously dissuaded from asking Radcliffe to alter his award". Mountbatten apparently had to be reminded that it was in his own interest, whatever the outcome, to let Radcliffe bear "the odium of arbitration". The Viceroy, along with his Chief of Staff, Lord Ismay, did meet with Radcliffe. Mountbatten later had irresistible urges to meddle with the evidence. He later thanked Ismay for persuading him not to intervene. Ismay had to record that his recollections of the meeting with Radcliffe were "far different" from Mountbatten's and that there was no need for Byzantine historical reconstruction. "Our consciences are perfectly clear", Ismay wrote, because Radcliffe himself claimed that the award represented his own "unfettered judgement". Here is a clue, though it may be misleading. It confirms Radcliffe's reputation as a man of high ethical standards. In any event the integrity of Sir Evan Jenkins is beyond question. He accepted the map for what it was, merely a provisional and rough indication of the boundary. He later stated that he would have solved the Gurdaspur problem in exactly the same way as Radcliffe. Thus the evidence seems to point to Mountbatten's nequity. He appears not to have intervened. Moore himself seems to deliver the Scottish verdict of not proven. Until now my own view has been that Mountbatten's staff succeeded in restraining him; but that in any event Radcliffe would not have listened. Having read Hamid's book, and having thought again about the circumstantial evidence, I now believe that Mountbatten probably persuaded Radcliffe to alter the boundary award.

Moore thinks that Radcliffe himself revised the boundary on his own initiative after taking into further consideration the local railways, rivers and canals. He judged that the Sulej

Auchinleck here demonstrates the stereotypes of the British military mind in its Indian setting. The Auk was a great soldier, and second to none in service to the Indian Army. In high politics he was out of his element.



river, as the natural frontier, should outweigh the principle guiding the overall division, that of "contiguous Muslim majorities". The award could be justified within its own local circumstances, without reference to Kashmir. All of this is exceedingly complex, but Moore's conclusion, drawn after exhaustive study of contemporary maps and demographic figures, may be clearly stated in his own words:

Radclyffe's award, which was finally published on 17 August 1947, is not to be understood in terms of the consistent application of simple principles such as the ascertainment of contiguous Muslim majorities... or predominant national interests in dual head-works.

It may be safely said that the modifications to the contiguous-majority principle consistently deprived Pakistan of territories to which that principle entitled her, and that "other factors" had the effect of enabling the Sikhs to consolidate themselves securely in East Punjab.

The conclusion is profoundly important, not merely for the 1947 settlement but for the evolution of the Sikh problem since then.

Mountbatten devoted most of his attention to solving the conflict between the Congress and the Muslim League; he did not spend much time reconciling the Sikhs to the partition of their own homeland. Radcliffe thus found himself in the position of having to provide a "para-military" solution to the Sikh problem. According to Moore, Radcliffe felt duty-bound to do justice to the Sikhs: "His award is consistent with that obligation above all others. It gave to India those 'debatable' areas... in which Sikhs were a substantial contiguous majority, approaching 25 per cent of the population." Once it is understood that Radcliffe was attempting to provide a settlement as acceptable as possible to the Sikhs, then his boundary award in the Punjab becomes comprehensible. Here Moore is substantiating the interpretation put forward by Professor Hugh Tinker ten years ago on the basis of much more scanty evidence. The Pakistanis, needless to say, were not sympathetic to the underlying logic of the award. They regarded the outcome as a "parting kick of the British to Pakistan". I myself do not think that Radcliffe had any particular bias against the Muslims. But he had such a high-powered and balanced intellect that he may well have provided an Indian corridor to Kashmir at the same time that he attempted to solve, as best he could, the problem of the Sikhs, to the slight disadvantage of the Pakistanis. He destroyed his papers; so we may never know for certain.

## Sticking to the tradition

Tom Hadden

PATRICK BISHOP and EAMONN MALLIE  
The Provisional IRA  
374pp. Heinemann. £12.95.  
043407401

Writing contemporary history is a difficult business at the best of times: there is a temptation to put too much emphasis on some new source of information and a tendency to take refuge in breathless narrative. Writing a contemporary history of an illegal organization such as the Irish Republican Army is all the more difficult. The propaganda war that underlies every "armed struggle" increases the risk of disinformation on all sides. And since the sources of new information can rarely be revealed, the reader must rely even more than is usual on the competence and independence of the author.

Patrick Bishop and Eamonn Mallie are well placed to avoid the worst of these dangers and to explain how the IRA operates and how it keeps going against all the odds. Both are seasoned reporters on Northern Ireland and must be as well acquainted as any with the rumour machine. Patrick Bishop has worked with *The Sunday Times*, the *Observer* and the *Daily Telegraph* and knows how things look from the British point of view. Eamonn Mallie is well connected among republicans and has earned a reputation for tough talking with the authorities in Belfast.

To understand the IRA, as the authors realize, it is essential to enter into its idiosyncratic view of the world. Bishop and Mallie go back to the origins of republican violence in the nineteenth-century Fenian movement and to the foundation of the IRA proper between 1916 and 1919. This helps them to explain how a refusal to compromise in any way is a central tenet of IRA ideology and, perhaps, essential to its survival. A movement which fought and lost a civil war over the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 and which hangs its claims to legitimacy on the Easter Rising in 1916 and the meeting of the so-called First Dail in 1919 cannot afford to enter into serious negotiations with anyone. Once the possibility of other forms of legitimacy is admitted—like post-1919 elections or any subsequent agreement between Britain and Ireland, let alone partition—the purity and the point of the continuing struggle are in jeopardy.

This refusal to consider seriously anything that happened after 1919 also helps to explain, though the authors do not make the point, why the opinions and even the existence of the Ulster unionists are of such little interest to the Provisionals. The argument and the war are with the British over what was done in 1921. To admit that the unionists should be given any say in the matter would undermine the logic and the justification for the whole enterprise. Hence the insistence, in the teeth of current reality, that the Royal Ulster Constabulary and all other institutions in Northern Ireland are British and as such legitimate targets.

The authors are also strong on the persistent internal politicking within the wider republican movement and on the murderous feuding which it regularly produces. They explain and document the convoluted process through which Goulding, MacGiolla and Johnston in the 1960s sought to create a new socialist republicanism following the abject failure of the border campaign between 1956 and 1962. There follows a revealing and authoritative account of how they became involved in and were ultimately overtaken by the events of 1968 and 1969. That strand of "official" republicanism still survives, though its adherents have almost all abjured violence and committed themselves to ordinary politics in what is now known as the Workers Party on both sides of the border.

Bishop and Mallie go on to explain how the Provisionals emerged from the renewed sectarian strife in the North and how in their turn and in a subtly different way they have sought to politicize their operations. Following the abortive cease-fire in 1975 and 1976 the Northern activists led by Gerry Adams gradually ousted the established Southern leaders, Ruairi O'Brady and Daithi O'Connell, first from the Army Council and then from Provisional Sinn Féin, its political front. Ruairi O'Brady's plan for a united but federal Ireland known as Eire Nua has in the process been superseded by Adams's double-barrelled strategy of fighting the war and elections with equal vigour. The initial success of this strategy, incidentally, owed more to the intransigence of the British Government over the hunger strikes than to any very clever thinking by the Provisionals. Adams himself was at first against it.

The new policy has led, as is almost inevitable in the republican movement, to yet another split. When Adams insisted, first in the

takes on a dramatic quality when the Prime Minister decides, in the buccaneering spirit of the Labour Government, that, come what may, India must continue to be a member of the Commonwealth. "There is... nothing inherently impossible in a republic forming part of a monarchy", Attlee wrote in early 1948.

The heart of Moore's work is an explanation of Nehru's motives in wishing to remain in the Commonwealth (even though India would become a republic); the constitutional gymnastics involved in reconciling an Indian republic with the British Crown; and the difficulties of persuading both old and new members of the Commonwealth to go along with the solution. Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary, put the question squarely when he asked whether it was worth keeping India in. "Her rulers are not animated by the same sentiments of kinship and loyalty as are those of the older Dominions", he wrote. Outside the government, Lord Salisbury, in a letter not quoted in Moore's book, expressed the Tory objections most lucidly: "So far as I can see, India's continued association with the Commonwealth does not help us in any way... She will not agree to any co-ordinated foreign policy. She is definitely hostile to our colonial policy. She reserves the right to stab us in the back at any moment at the United Nations."

Gradually Bevin and other members of the Cabinet became converted, not for sentimental reasons, but because they saw advantages in having close links with India in the deteriorating circumstances of the Cold War. Similar motives could be found on the Indian side, in part because of Nehru's mistrust of the United States. He thought it "astonishing how naive the Americans are in their foreign policy".

Moore's book is a major contribution to the history of both post-war architecture and post-war education; and, as an added bonus, it also manages to throw new light on issues as diverse as "Bernalism", the Arts-and-Crafts Movement, child-centred education and post-war reconstruction.

Post-war school building, Saint argues, was masterminded by a tightly knit group of architects, notably Dan Lacey, Donald Gibson and Johnson-Marshall. Their outlook was shaped by the idiosyncratic radicalism of the

Army Council and then at the Provisional Sinn Féin and *féin* (party conference) late last year, on abandoning the traditional policy of abstentionism—not taking up seats in any illegitimate parliament, north or south of the border or in Britain—O'Brady and his followers walked out and formed Republican Sinn Féin, a third wing of the movement, which might perhaps be called the Traditionalists.

The full implications of these developments are not worked out by the authors, perhaps because they do not readily fit a major theme of the book, that traditionalism is of the essence of the movement. Nor is any real attempt made to assess the prospects for Adams's new strategy. The difficulties are not inconsiderable. Voters in the Republic, unlike those in the North, have never given more than marginal support to the Provisionals. They won a mere 2 per cent of the votes and no seats at all in the recent general election. The Irish, like the British, are fed up with Northern Ireland. They are also, though it must not be said too loudly yet, appalled at the thought of unification. That is why the new Anglo-Irish Agreement, which in effect puts unification on a very long finger, is so popular in the South. The more successful Adams and his men are in keeping the pot boiling in the North, the more disenchanted people in the Republic are likely to become. And since keeping the pot boiling currently means murdering more Protestants and threatening the livelihood of numerous Catholics in the North, the prospects of an electoral breakthrough even there are slim. Provisional Sinn Féin managed only just over 10 per cent in the British general election in June, scarcely evidence of a great popular struggle for freedom.

There is a similar lack of analysis in the account of the war itself. Eamonn Mallie has interviewed many of those involved in the action from 1969 onwards and tells a number of good "inside stories". Experts in the propaganda war will enjoy some not very surprising revelations and may even be able to identify who said what, though the notes give only such entities as unnamed "Interview with authors" or "private information". But the narrative soon degenerates into a journalistic description of some of the most serious and notorious incidents over the years. Only occasionally do the authors pause for breath and attempt to explain how the Provisionals have organized their operations at various stages in the campaign.

The limited extent of the much-vaunted "cell structure" adopted after 1976 is explained. There is also a useful but all too brief discussion of finance, though the suggestion that it takes only £2,500 a week to run the armed struggle compared with a figure of £10,000 for the network of Sinn Féin advice centres must be taken with a pinch of salt. A good deal of this organizational background, however, appears to have been drawn from the confessions of supergrassers such as Christopher Black and from other court cases. As a result some important issues, such as protection rackets and the IRA's European offensive, are hardly mentioned. There are also some confusions in the relationship between the IRA's campaign and contemporary political developments and a few careless errors in dating—both the Battle of the Boyne and the Birmingham bombs are misdated.

The most disappointing aspect of this part of the book is the absence of any sustained analysis of the prospects for the armed struggle. The importance to IRA recruitment of abuses by the Army and the RUC, and high levels of poverty, unemployment and general alienation in sections of the Catholic community, is repeatedly stressed. But there is very little discussion of the tactics adopted by the Provisionals' opponents—the Army and the RUC on one side and loyalist paramilitaries on the other—and of their impact on the campaign. Nor is there any attempt to account for the strange fact that whenever things get really bad in Northern Ireland both sides seem to draw back from what might be thought by outsiders to be the inevitable civil war. The communal nature of the conflict and the limitations which this places on activists are all too often ignored. As a result the account of the campaign often slips imperceptibly into an inherently one-sided narrative of a series of successes and failures. The conclusion that violent republicanism is an ineradicable and often a family tradition is perhaps true. But there is much more to it than that. The tradition has in the past declined into insignificance and might do so again. There is all the difference in the world between a movement which can sustain an acceptable or even an unacceptable level of violence and one which can achieve its ultimate objectives. The authors' consistent refusal to embark on an assessment of the Provisionals' military and political prospects is a serious flaw in an otherwise interesting and readable book.

The evolution of society is one of the central problems of social anthropology, for which Professor Halpikis's latest book proposes an entirely novel solution. £35.00  
0 18 827286 0, 424 pages, Clarendon Press

## A triumph of modernism

Adrian Wooldridge

ANDREW SAINT  
*Towards a Social Architecture: The role of school-building in post-war England*  
267pp. Yale University Press. £19.95.  
030003830 5

The Modernist Movement's reputation has never been lower. The New Right vilifies modernist buildings as monstrous and modernist theory as mumbo-jumbo: high-flying architects avoid public practice and denounce prefabrication; and the public habitually associates modernism with dreary, botched and even incompetent construction. Aesthetic distaste for modernism is reinforced by a deeper hostility to the faith in public ownership and State planning which inspired it. The Right, it seems, has aesthetics as well as economics on its side.

In *Towards a Social Architecture: The role of school-building in post-war England*, Andrew Saint presents a vigorous challenge to this nascent orthodoxy. He argues that English post-war school building was a uniquely successful expression of modernist philosophy; that it was a model of disciplined, efficient and flexible design; and that the self-effacing and semi-anonymous man who presided over its development, Sirat Johnson-Marshall, was perhaps the greatest, and certainly the most influential, modern English architect. Rigorously researched, elegantly written and splendidly produced, Saint's book is a major contribution to the history of both post-war architecture and post-war education; and, as an added bonus, it also manages to throw new light on issues as diverse as "Bernalism", the Arts-and-Crafts Movement, child-centred education and post-war reconstruction.

Post-war school building, Saint argues, was masterminded by a tightly knit group of architects, notably Dan Lacey, Donald Gibson and Johnson-Marshall. Their outlook was shaped by the idiosyncratic radicalism of the

1930s, with its heady faith in central planning, scientific management and mass production. From J. D. Bernal they learned that scientific planning could revitalize the economy and that mass production could serve high culture; from Patrick Geddes and his disciple E. A. A. Rowse they discovered that design could be informed by social surveys; and from Walter Gropius, exiled in Britain between 1934 and 1937, they heard that architects should come to terms with both industry and democracy, using the most advanced industrial techniques available to build schools and houses for the masses. They consequently adopted community architecture as their ideal, mass production as their method, and public practice as their vocation.

The war consolidated these convictions, demonstrating the virtues of scientific planning and state management and underlining the case for social reconstruction. It also provided young architects with invaluable practical experience of work on large-scale and centrally co-ordinated projects, carried out at speed and based on the integration of science, industry and design. The Camouflage Development and Training Centre, for example, brought together two of the most influential architects of the post-war years, Johnson-Marshall and David Medd, and taught them lessons which they were to apply repeatedly over the coming decades. Finally, post-war reconstruction posed problems which forced them to test their philosophy in practice. The nation's housing stock had run down; labour was in short supply; the normal links between architects, planners and suppliers were strained or severed; and the post-war surge in population threatened to undermine the Butler Education Act's commitment to "secondary education for all".

In 1945 Johnson-Marshall and his colleagues were thus confronted with an urgent question: how could enough schools be provided to meet an explosion in popular demand? The answer, it seemed, lay in prefabrication. Prefabrication

provided a means of building cheaply and efficiently in conditions of acute shortages of men, money and materials; it also appealed to architects inclined to a utopian faith in science and a romantic vision of industrial production. By moving the centre of construction from the building site, where conditions were messy and confused, to the factory, where they were efficient and controlled, prefabrication promised to make the building industry at once more efficient and more civilized. Saint argues that these architects grasped the possibilities inherent in prefabrication, turning a stopgap technique, adopted in response to shortages, into a successful rival to traditional modes of construction.

Fortunately, the post-war architects were also motivated by educational considerations. Inspired by the cult of child-centred teaching, which many of them had imbibed during their own educations at private progressive schools, they hoped that school buildings would put the needs of children above everything else. Design was to be used to stimulate the interests of children rather than to massage the egos of adults, and grandeur and proportion were to be sacrificed to intimacy and utility. In consequence, they concentrated on everyday detail rather than imposing façades, designing child-sized furniture and facilities, providing striking murals and varied colour schemes, and improving lighting and layout.

Somewhat surprisingly, these socialist architects gained their first major successes in a Tory-controlled county council—Hertfordshire. Staid, rural and obscure, Hertfordshire was exceptional only in the severe pressures of population which confronted its schools. But its school building programme provided Johnson-Marshall and his lieutenants with an opportunity of fulfilling their radical ideals, and their achievements, Saint argues, were remarkable. First, they eschewed the hand-to-mouth style characteristic of the architecture of the time, building on wartime experience to develop a consistent set of architectural and

educational objectives. Second, they transformed the possibilities of prefabrication by developing a new technology of building—a technology which was at once broadly applicable and tolerably flexible, and which designers could remodel and develop. Third, they laid down procedures for collaboration and interchange between users, designers and manufacturers which were more ambitious, continuous and considered than anything previously attempted in British architecture. Fourth, despite shortages and crises, they discovered a means to advance educational opportunity not just in the occasional school but equally throughout the entire building programme. "Hertfordshire's post-war schools", Saint argues, "seemed at last to lift from public-sector building the shadow of the poor law and to give England its first taste of a democratic architecture."

Impressed by Hertfordshire's achievement in building schools and controlling costs, and confronted with a sudden leap in the birth rate—200,000 new school places were to be needed every year up to 1955—the Ministry of Education invited Johnson-Marshall to become its chief architect. He took up his new position in the summer of 1948, after less than three years in Hertfordshire, and rapidly began to apply the Herts method to the rest of the country. He turned the Architecture and Building Branch of the Ministry (the "A & B" Branch in this abbreviation-laden book) into a centre of expertise, intent on providing local authorities with advice, information and encouragement; persuaded local authorities to think of school building in terms of regular production, standardized techniques and long-term expenditure; and introduced a rigorous system of cost planning and cost limits. Under his guidance, shortages which might have been devastating were transformed into opportunities for innovative building. By planning schools more carefully, by costing every item of expenditure, and by eliminating every trace of wastage, he improved designs and squeezed more schools.

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# The role of the governors

Jean Floud

AMY GUTMANN  
Democratic Education  
321pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press.  
£30.20.  
0691 077363

According to Aristotle, "the citizens of a State should always be educated to suit the constitution of their State". In a democracy it falls, by definition, to the self-governing citizens themselves to see to it that this happens, and that democracy is perpetuated in the hearts and minds of succeeding generations. Social scientists write about "political socialization", by which they mean the largely unconscious processes by which societies perpetuate themselves through the cultivation of appropriate attitudes, values and habits of mind. But when citizens rule they must apply themselves consciously to this process of social reproduction.

How is this to be done? There is no right answer. Much has been written about the purposes of education in a democracy, but the philosophical justifications of most educational programmes are not sufficiently strong or determinate to override the actual disagreements of interested parties. So long as they wish to remain democrats they must agree to differ on any and every point but the need to teach the moral demands of democratic life,

and must concentrate on securing a principled distribution of authority and fair policy-making procedures. The point about democracy is that it can ensure legitimate, but not necessarily "correct" policies.

This is the line taken by Amy Gutmann in *Democratic Education*, which is unusual in offering a specifically political theory of education, intended to provide principled answers to the question: Who should make educational policy and subject to what constraints?

The theory is meant for large, economically advanced, plural societies, in which schooling is provided, for the most part, by the State, though educational entrepreneurs, like-minded parents and religious associations are all allowed to sponsor private schools. It is rigorously deployed and its practical implications are conscientiously demonstrated in close, well-documented and instructive discussion of controversial issues in the politics of American education, notably: teaching creationism and civics; sex education and sexist education; banning and approving school books; bilingualism; racial integration and racial separatism; parent power; the rights and duties of teachers. To put the theory to the same test in the English context would take another book, and it would be worth while.

The argument in *Democratic Education* is very full and much more interesting than the outcome, which is to the effect that, given (by definition) maximum scope for participation in

collective policy-making, the authority of all interested parties, including parents and the democratic State itself, is limited by moral principles intrinsic to the democratic ideal: the principle of "non-repression" (of critical inquiry) and the principle of "non-discrimination" (no exclusion of educable children from educational provision on educationally irrelevant grounds such as race, sex or social class). In practice, these constraints mean that all parties must cede part of their authority to professional educators. Accordingly, in a democratic society the schools must enjoy a measure of autonomy, not merely in recognition of teachers' professional skills but to enable them to discharge their moral responsibility for cultivating the democratic character of future citizens brought together from the diverse communities and cultures thrown up by the free association of adults in the larger political community.

"Significant policy prescriptions presuppose a theory - a political theory - of the proper role of government in education." True; but in established democracies most arguments are likely to turn on a view of the facts. Thus, the current British Secretary of State for Education believes that the basic educational needs of the nation's children are not being met in the maintained schools; he therefore proposes to introduce a national curriculum. He believes that most concerned parents with children in the maintained schools, unlike those with children in independent schools, are not getting what they want for their children and, on grounds of equity, should be assisted to do so. He also believes that to introduce an element of competition into the school system will have the effect of raising standards. He accordingly proposes a range of measures to increase parents' influence in school governing bodies and their freedom of choice of schools for their children. He believes that bureaucratic and doctrinaire local education authorities stand in the way of the desirable freedom of schools to govern themselves; he therefore proposes substantial transfers of their managerial powers to the governors and heads of schools. He believes that the development of professional attitudes and standards among teachers is obstructed by the misguided opposition of their unions to a differentiated career and salary structure; he therefore undercuts the power and influence of the unions by withdrawing their right to negotiate teachers' pay claims.

If, underlying these measures, there is a theory of the proper role of government in education, it is one perfectly in keeping with that recommended in *Democratic Education*, given that the Secretary of State holds office in a democratically elected government which takes the view that the state of affairs in education calls for a complete overhaul of the way schools are run and a drastic redistribution of power in favour of parents, governors and heads of schools. The policy is legitimate, but controversial because the diagnosis of the situation and the likely consequences of the proposed measures are controversial. Does the situation really call for the undemocratic abrogation of local authority powers and the imposition of statutory control (instead of existing powers of persuasion) of all syllabuses and examinations, to ensure that they conform to a national curriculum? Is it democratically appropriate to extend parents' choice by providing more assisted places in independent schools and permitting governors and parents to take their schools out of local control by opting to receive grant direct from central government? Will not the result be to encourage class separatism and racial segregation and to diminish the quality of education for those children - possibly a majority - whose parents are neither knowledgeable nor activist?

Paradoxically, it is often harder in politics to reach agreement on empirical than on theoretical questions, though this is not to say that we can do without a political theory of education. Even if, *per impossibile*, we were to agree on the diagnosis of the situation calling for intervention, we might yet want to advocate other measures on the grounds that those proposed were, or would turn out to be, inimical to democracy; and this would be a theoretical and not merely a consequentialist argument about the requirements of the democratic ideal - something for a political theorist like the author of *Democratic Education* to explicate.

# Lurid fact and lurid fiction

Richard Shannon

RICHARD D. ALTICK  
Evil Encounters: Two Victorian sensations  
164pp. Murray: £12.95.  
0795 43738

In July 1861, two extremely unpleasant occurrences were reported copiously and avidly in the London (and much of the provincial) press. In the one case a solicitor and bill discounter (and moneylender) attempted to murder the lover of the woman he had become obsessed with. The intended victim, however, a retired military gentleman, despite grievous gunshot wounds in the head and neck, turned on his assailant and, in a frenzied and brutish struggle, reduced him to barely breathing pulp by employment of a stout pair of fire tongs and a large bottle. The solicitor died shortly afterwards in Charing Cross hospital and the major (who survived to live to nearly his ninetieth year) was judged to have lawfully killed his would-be murderer in justifiable self defence.

In the other case a French baron, well known in the higher reaches of London society, was accused of attempting to murder his son. The motive alleged was that, in the event of the son's death, the father would become entitled to a very large sum of money; which, as it was further alleged, he was much in need of. The son, for reasons which were never made clear, declined to testify in court against his father. The latter, accordingly, charged with attempted murder, was convicted ultimately merely of unlawful wounding and sentenced to hard labour for a year.

# The skeleton in the corset

Roy Porter

CATHERINE GALLAGHER and THOMAS LAQUEUR (Editors)  
The Making of the Modern Body: Sexuality and society in the nineteenth century  
242pp. University of California Press. £31.25 (paperback, £8.95).  
0520 059603

In a former incarnation, these eight essays made up a lively and integrated number of the *Journal of Reproductive Medicine*. Looked at, however, as if it were a book of commissioned essays, *The Making of the Modern Body* is less satisfactory. There is a certain unity of subject-matter (it is all about "sex and society" indeed, though not all about the nineteenth century), and several of the contributions are a treat to read. Alain Corbin's "Commercial sexuality" in nineteenth-century France" offers a pungent account of the policing of prostitution, distilled from his regrettably untranslated book *Les Filles de nées*, to which Christine Buckle-Glucksman's "Catastrophic Utopia" forms a scintillating companion piece, analysing Walter Benjamin's analysis of Baudelaire's analysis of the prostitute as the epitome of the modern.

Pride of place, however, must go to D. A. Miller's "Cage hulk foies: Sensation and gender in Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White*". Miller uses tricks of writing - and a very mannered prose - to exemplify what Wilkie Collins achieved with tricks of writing: the creation of sensation, or, in other words, the forging of an "association of nervousness with reading". What Collins conjured up was not just mystery, not just the confounding of reason and madness (is who is mad who is shut up? and vice versa), but above all the dissolution of fixed gender and psychosexual identity (Marion is "male-identified" and Walter possesses a "queer heterosexual identity" with a "quasi-homosexual genealogy"). Surprise follows surprise in Miller's pyrotechnical account, including a guest appearance from Judge Daniel Schreber, with all the Freudian paraphernalia of homosexual paranoia; and we are left in no doubt that Wilkie Collins (long before Jackie) was the supreme exponent of the camp novel.

Does this volume, however, really go beyond the general problematic of sex and gender to focus attention on "the making of the modern body"? The first two contributions

Richard D. Altick had the excellent notion of observing attentively the press response to these two lurid cases *celebres* with a view to observing the Victorian age observing itself. The shock effect of the cases provoked a great amount of social and moral speculation and anxious ruminations upon the nation's well-being. In the first case, public horror was excited especially by the image of two Englishmen, one a gentleman and the other a passable version of one, engaging in a "barbarous", "frightful", "fearful", "deadly", "extraordinary and desperate" physical struggle, man to man but more like two frenzied savage animals, to the death: all in an elaborately furnished parlour in Northumberland Street, Strand.

And *cherchez la femme* with a vengeance! The testimony given by the lady, fearful, swooning, pathetic, as to how she had become financially entrapped by the moneylending solicitor, exacerbated the atmosphere of improper sexuality. (She was lodged by her paramour with an almost too perfectly classical appropriateness in St John's Wood.) How could the solicitor's desperate and sordidly assiduous determination to wrest her from her protector be accounted for otherwise than, as the *Daily Telegraph* put it, by his "labouring under an erotic rables"?

The second case confronted the public with the horror of the sacred father-son relationship smirched in murderous squalor: lace had never looked filthier. How was it to be explained that a nobleman of the utmost distinction of manner and address, admired by all who knew him in the best society for his affability and charm and every attribute of a gentleman of honour, a member of many of the most

clearly do, possessing a well-defined sense of what this otherwise dangerously general phrase should quite specifically denote, and complementing each other in the process. These are Thomas Laqueur's analysis of shifting notions of the essence of gender difference, as understood through male and female reproductive physiology, and Linda Schiebinger's exploration of the earliest anatomical representations of the female skeleton. Both authors locate a profound transformation taking place in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

Traditional physiology from the Greeks onwards viewed women as inferior (even "monstrous") versions of men, as human beings who had failed fully to achieve their potential. That women were smaller and weaker proved, in the old humoral theory, that they had less "heat". Lacking heat or energy (Laqueur explains), the female genitals, unlike the male, had remained internal; the female reproductive system was thus an inverted mirror-image of the male. Thus male and female reproductive biology worked in essentially similar ways. For conception to occur, both male and female orgasm - indeed, ejaculation - were thought necessary. Traditionally, therefore, women were seen as highly sexed.

All this changed during the course of the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century. The independence of the ovulation cycle and the irrelevance of the female orgasm to fecundation were discovered. Science now permitted the healthy woman to be seen as essentially different from, but complementary to, the male (as Schiebinger's survey of skeletons shows): the "Victorian" sexless woman was born. Yet science did not of itself transform cultural stereotypes; neither, however, did ideology straightforwardly dictate what the anatomists and embryologists saw.

Demonstrating such interplay between science, ideology and social interests in forging new representations is crucial if we are to establish that the body was created anew to meet the needs of the new age. Unfortunately, the probing insights of Laqueur's and Schiebinger's papers (both of which focus overwhelmingly on the years before 1800) are not really carried through by the nineteenth-century articles, and the whole volume was obviously researched too early to draw on Rev. Gay's revisionist reworking of Victorian sexuality. Nevertheless, the editors' introduction maps out an admirable agenda for a post-Foucaultian history of the body.

exclusive clubs, could launch a murderous assault on his own son, on such a mean and low motive - and that in a leafy and not unrefined Surrey lane in broad daylight! The horror of attempted filicide somehow was all the more luridly heightened for the press and the public by the circumstance that father and son were returning from a visit of respect to the exiled Orléans family at Claremont. The fact that the son was a Cambridge graduate underlined the father's English commitment and preferred domicile, and deprived the public of consolation which might otherwise have been derived on the grounds that they were foreigners; for, as Mr Pecksniff had put it, foreigners will do as they do.

It was all very perplexing. Society, as *Fraser's Magazine* put it, which appears to be so light and artificial, and on which the surface bubbles are so numerous and bright, is every now and then startled from its placidity by some unusual testimony to the deadly strength of the rapid currents which whirl and eddy beneath. That the fierce passions of men are not tamed by the progress of civilization is evidenced by the prevalence of deadly outbreaks, such as a few months ago wrung from the *Times* an appeal to the rulers of the people, to "diminish crime by terror, if they could not do so by discipline"; and further to complain, "that in the middle of the nineteenth century, when education has been so long at work, and when civilization is considered so triumphant, it was called upon to record and discuss such numerous and shocking examples of crime".

Altick comments upon the feverish rum of a new phenomenon of "sensation fiction" in the period, in which "sensation novelists", on behalf of their readers, turned the reverential ideal of home and family inside out, purporting to discover lurking behind the innocent façade of decorous life a prodigious quantity of illicit behaviour. "The attraction of this genre, somewhat like the attraction of the modern English murder mystery, was in the distance it created between lurid and dangerous fiction and de-

pendably staid and safe life." But, as Altick goes on to point out, these two cases "induced newspaper commentators to adopt quite a different view: the everyday presence of dark mysteries and of social corruption was not a figment of sensation novelists' diseased imaginations but a hard fact to be faced".

Altick's larger thesis concerns "the dawn age of sensation". This, in all its literary applications, he handles well, offering many fascinating insights. Critics and commentators were worried by the power of melodrama as wielded especially by Dickens, with "incidents all but impossible, and in themselves strange, dangerous and exciting". Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White*, serialized in Dickens's *All the Year Round* in 1859-60, provoked the specific generic categorization of "sensation novel", which critics linked, via these two "evil encounters", with "the moral disorganization of which all classes of society are now complaining, and which forms the staple of most of our sensation novels". Altick thus makes the evil encounters pegs upon which he hangs, with assured expertise, the intricacies of the links between Victorian fact and Victorian fiction. He is less satisfying in his treatment of the press itself. He makes use of its columns in masterful style. But his book lacks a corresponding degree of attention to the way newspapers at the time were changing. Apart from one early reference to the abolition of the newspaper stamp tax in 1835 and the emergence therefrom of the *Daily Telegraph* as the first penny daily, he makes little or nothing of the social significance of newspapers. The previous year of 1860, after all, had seen the "evil encounter" of Lord Palmerston and Derby colluding to block Gladstone's budget proposal to abolish the duties on paper. Gladstone certainly saw his confrontation with the Lords again in 1861, and his eventual success, not very differently in spirit from one who had saved his life by desperate execution with fire tongs and bottle.

more space and more facilities out of a highly restricted budget.

Saint argues that Johnson-Marshall's building programme achieved some of its most spectacular successes in Nottinghamshire. Confronted with a potentially devastating technical problem - mining subsidence - the Nottinghamshire education authority reacted with impressive resourcefulness. Donald Gibson, the county architect between 1958 and 1964, suggested that subsidence should be counteracted not by building expensive foundations but by erecting schools upon light-steel spring-loaded frames, capable of rolling with the movements of the earth. His solution was so successful - not only did it work but it also saved money - that it inspired a new approach to building, the Consortium of Local Authorities' Special Programme (CLASP), which enabled a number of local education authorities with subsidence problems - Derbyshire, Coventry, Durham, Glamorgan, the West Riding of Yorkshire and Leicester City as well as Nottinghamshire - to pool their resources and to build more and better schools.

In 1956, with CLASP about to be formalized, Johnson-Marshall abandoned the public for the private sector, forming Robert Mathew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners. Saint hints that this move was a mistake - it democratized the public sector and brought little satisfaction to Johnson-Marshall, who missed his old job and quarrelled with Mathew - but it did enable techniques pioneered in post-war school building to be applied in a new area: the expanding universities, polytechnics and colleges of education of the 1960s. The most successful example of this application was York University. Johnson-Marshall established a highly successful relationship with the first Vice-Chancellor of York, Eric James; kept his expenditure firmly within financial limits at a time when other university architects were merrily overspending their budgets; and managed to build, according to Saint, "a university more deeply pondered and clearly conceived than any of its potential rivals". The *Observer's* architectural correspondent expressed Johnson-Marshall's accomplishment at York succinctly:

The client likes the architects, the architects like the builder. The builder likes the architects, and this architectural correspondent likes the buildings. This is obviously a success story all round.

Despite its achievements, the school building programme collapsed in the mid-1970s. Talented young architects, frustrated with the constraints and anonymity of public building, fled to the private sector, rampant inflation threw the building industry into disarray, prefabrication excited mounting public antipathy, the Treasury imposed severe limits on public expenditure, and the problem which inspired Johnson-Marshall and his colleagues - how to build imaginatively and fairly for the whole population - seemed increasingly to belong to a naive post-war consensus.

Undaunted by fashion, Andrew Saint makes a persuasive case for the past successes and present relevance of post-war school architecture. "Alone in Britain, without exact parallel in other countries," he insists, "its proponents grasped the chances for social development implicit in modern architecture since the 1930s and succeeded in applying its principles in such a way as to benefit a whole nation." Confronted with severe shortages and forced to work at high speed, they managed, by dint of technical innovation and organizational genius, to house a whole generation of children in state schools which were at once imaginative, practical and tailored to local circumstances. If architects are ever again entrusted with a similar programme of public building, they should certainly start by reading this splendid book.

*Truth, Liberty, Religion: Essays celebrating two hundred years of Manchester College*, edited by Barbara Smith (325pp, with 14 black-and-white illustrations. Manchester College, Mansfield Road, Oxford OX1 3TD. £19.95. 0 9508715 1 6), contains ten essays, with an introduction by Asa Briggs, on the history of Unitarian thought and of its associated dissenting educational institution, in Oxford since 1889 but a direct successor of the eighteenth-century Warrington Academy which became Manchester Academy in 1786.

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scuttering plastic cups ... a *Mirror's*  
double-page centre-spread, caught in grained wind,

lifts on a gritty, urinous-odoured gust,

levitates, kite-like, gale-buoyed, higher,

rises in slow flaps, graceful, up-spiralling,

soars to the 19th storey, with pulchritude

slaps against, clingly hugs

one of the uppermost panes.

[Squalor Magnificat, grot, secular ecstasy Hymn,  
squalid-agitated filth and a high-rise worthy of Paean.]

[Grot is a great democrat. *H. sap* consanguined by waste  
cultural disparates, sub-trog and top prof, Chernobyl/Chelsea -  
suddenly neighbourly now: mutual Geigered air croaks.]

Hall, democratic impartiality -  
acid rain laced with lethal reactor-leak,  
frozen in pills, percusses, fairly  
riddles the brainpans of vassals/viscounts

Emerald digits heralding increases  
glow from the charcoal VDU screens

nineteen floors up where populous feculence  
blands, with cathartic distance, to picturesque.

Suddenly, borne on some freak updraught,  
double-page-spread of a *Daily Mirror*

(EFFORTS ARE NOW BEING MADE TO ENCASE THE DAMAGED REACTOR)  
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## Towards a legal science

A. W. B. Simpson

RICHARD TUR and WILLIAM TWINING  
(Editors)  
Essays on Kelsen  
345 pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £35.  
0198254709

If such matters could be determined by vote, there is little doubt that Hans Kelsen (1881-1973) would be regarded by the international community of legal scholars as the major legal philosopher of this century. His writings were voluminous, tightly and forcefully argued, and directed to issues of basic importance in jurisprudence. Together they present, in his *Pure Theory of Law*, a system of legal philosophy, and one that has, as such, no rival in modern times. Yet, at least in the Anglo-American world, I suspect that Kelsen is more often mentioned with respect than actually read and studied, and his theoretical views are too commonly reproduced in crudely simplified forms. Modern controversies in jurisprudence, for example over the nature of the judicial process, the theoretical possibility of the rule of law, or the relationship between ethics and law, are all conducted with little or no reference to his work, and even in so influential a book as H. L. A. Hart's *The Concept of Law*, which owes much to Kelsen, the discussion of his ideas, though important, is strikingly limited and largely confined to footnotes.

No doubt problems of language, together with the sheer difficulty of Kelsen's ideas, partly explain this, though in fairness he, unlike some writers in the modern critical legal studies movement, never adopted a style of writing which set out to impress by mystifying. Part of the explanation lies also in the fact that

his writings belong to a metaphysical genre which many find repulsive and impenetrable. But a more basic reason is that Kelsen's legal theory, though presented as universal, is not in reality so; legal theories never are. They are tied to particular schemes of legal thought. Kelsen's belongs to the civil law tradition of continental Europe, and is, for this reason, alien to lawyers from the common law world.

The basic enterprise on which he embarked was to develop a theory which showed that an objective legal science, purified of all subjective and ideological elements, was possible. In Vienna, where he lived and worked until 1929, the ideas he developed in the pursuit of this enterprise were exciting and controversial, for example his claim that the State, so far from creating the law, was identical with it. I recall the musicologist and composer Egon Wellesz, who lived at one time next door to Kelsen when Kelsen was a judge in Vienna, telling me once in a confidential way: "They did not like Kelsen you know. He abolished the State." But what seemed important in Vienna in the 1920s seems less so today; translated into a different context, Kelsen's work appears less exciting, and in the common law world belief in the possibility of an objective legal science, in the sense understood by Kelsen, has long been extinct.

Naturally enough, he did not concern himself with those attitudes to law which have dethroned legal science in the common law tradition; why should he? It requires therefore some considerable intellectual effort to meet Kelsen on his own terms, and it is in consequence understandable that this great jurist has been somewhat neglected. In 1981, on the centenary of his birth, the United Kingdom Association for Legal and Social Philosophy organized a conference on Kelsen in Edin-

burgh, and this volume prints, in a revised form, papers given there and a translation of a paper delivered by Kelsen himself in 1964. This deals with the nature of a constitution and its relationship to his claim that the validity of the norms which constitute a legal order derive from a basic or fundamental norm, the *Grundnorm*. The editors have added an introduction which, given the difficulty of the subject-matter, is something of a *tour de force*.

Alida Wilson and Hillel Steiner open with a discussion of the relationship between Kelsen's work and Kant. Next we have from Joseph Raz and Roberto Vernengo an exploration of Kelsen's notion of the basic or fundamental norm; the latter's paper being a reply to earlier criticism of Kelsen by Raz. Iain Stewart and Richard Tur's papers, though appearing in a section entitled "Social Theory and Jurisprudence", are considerably concerned to trace out other Kantian themes in Kelsen's thought. Then follow four papers, by Ota Weinberger, J. W. Harris, Stanley Paulson and Inés Weyland, which deal with problematic logical ideas embodied in the *Pure Theory*, for example Kelsen's claim that a single legal order cannot embody contradictory norms. Then Philip Pettit and Jes Jürup examine Kelsen's relativistic theory of justice, and the collection concludes with a paper by the late Hedley Bull on Kelsen's views on International Law, on which his writings were extensive.

The quality of the papers here, some critical, some defensive, and their determination to grapple seriously with the complex, evolving and not always obviously consistent ideas of a great jurist, should surely redirect scholarly interest towards his work, though it seems unlikely that Kelsen's brand of positivism will ever seem wholly convincing, as he himself intended it to be.

surprise to find a large group of non-gentry among the barristers; the same had been true of the sergeants in the previous century. Sometimes an Aunt Sally is created, as in the assertion "that the early modern bar is generally thought to have been recruited from the younger sons of the landed gentry"; the elder sons Prest actually finds are exactly what recent research would predict. Or again, despite the suggestion that recruitment was more diverse, the late Elizabethan and early Stuart Bar was still dominated by southerners, as it had been a century before; it was the Welsh who were the real novelty.

Prest will surprise legal historians by his attempt to revive an interpretation of early Stuart history as the struggle between common law and the royal prerogative. Many political historians too - certainly the revisionists - will raise their eyebrows at the assertion that a majority of the Bar was "influenced by a corporate ethos which at the very least sat uneasily with the political values generally favoured at court", while to argue that "the rise of the barristers can hardly be separated, both as cause and effect, from the victory of an economic and social order which was already in the process of creating the world's first industrial nation" is hardly fashionable.

Yet these important points on which issue will be taken with Prest must not be allowed to obscure the value of the book, overall and in the particular. The second chapter is a nicely detailed and original essay which describes exactly what a career at the Elizabethan and early Stuart Bar involved, and leaves the reader with the overriding impression of the difference it made if one was the "favourite" of some judge or other lawyer of influence. Elsewhere, the relation between lawyers and urban corporations is for the first time given something like its proper place.

Excellent use is made throughout of feedback, and lawyers' private papers. Indeed, one wants to hear more about some of the cast of characters, notably Henry Sherfield, the puritan recorder of Salisbury. Sherfield's account of his conversation with William Noy, an old friend who, as Attorney-General, had just been forced to prosecute him in Star Chamber for smashing a stained-glass church window, is one of the most revealing things in the book.

As it is, Prest seems often to overstate the contrast between his sample and what we already know of earlier lawyers. It is no real

## Rule of law

John Gardner

H. MCCOUBREY  
The Development of Naturalist Legal Theory  
210pp. Croom Helm. £27.50.  
0709946694

The supposed "obligation to obey the law" has never generated more serious moral questions than it does now. Are we bound to respect the law, for example, when we protest about nuclear weapons? Are newspaper or television reporters bound to respect censorship laws?

The strength of political obligation in such matters is the concern of "naturalist" legal theory, which is committed to setting the limits within which the law is entitled to our allegiance in spite of pressing conscientious difficulties. It is surprising, on this account, to find that H. McCoubrey's new study offers few contributions to contemporary debate on any issue of conscientious concern. Instead, he traces the development of the "naturalist" technique from primitive times to the present.

McCoubrey attempts the excessively legalistic, and somewhat dubious, enterprise of classifying a very diverse selection of political theories under the description of "naturalist". Unfortunately, his is a classification by caricature, as is evidenced by the way he contrasts "naturalist" theory and "legal positivism".

"Positivist" theories are first characterized in a way that would cause their proponents to frown. Hart's *The Concept of Law* is seen as a thesis that laws are "rules" rather than "standards", so that his "theory is essentially an attempt to recast classical positivism in a more sophisticated mode". In fact, Hart's work is littered with examples of legal "standards" in action. McCoubrey also questions Hart's concept of "obligation", portraying it as coercion at an institutional level. But this ignores the important possibility of meaningful obligation being established by social normativity, which has been explored by Hans Kelsen and Joseph Raz.

Then, "naturalism" and "positivism" are explained as if, together, they exhausted the possible ways of thinking about law. Marxist legal theory and Ronald Dworkin's liberalism are both admitted (tentatively) to the naturalist camp, as "quasi-naturalist". Here, however, McCoubrey fails to acknowledge that legal theory has splintered well beyond the stage where "positivism" and "naturalism" are its crucial classifications. His examination of Dworkin, in particular, is a weak interpretation of a very strong thesis. Surprisingly, McCoubrey does not even comment on the radical shifts of attitude revealed in Dworkin's most recent work. His *Law's Empire* (1986), with its arguably "positivistic" concentration upon the integrity of legal practice, is not referred to.

McCoubrey's study of traditional naturalist theory is very learned, but it combines uncomfortably with a rather flimsy analysis of more recent political thought. Like Hart and Dworkin, Kant and Hobbes receive limited and relatively trivial consideration. The comparative completeness and technicality of more recent political theory may well mean that any brief analysis of it is of little use. But the real mistake McCoubrey makes is in trying to treat post-Enlightenment liberal theorists as "naturalist" at all.

The book has two genuinely stimulating chapters: one on Nazi law and the post-war problems it gave rise to, where McCoubrey uses legal materials to generate a set of novel, critical conclusions; and a second in his conclusion, where he begins to ask - too late in the day - some of the important methodological questions, answers to which can generate theories of obligation. Could there ever be a value-free purpose for law? Are humanity and equity settled moral norms?

The book is described by its author as an "outline" and it would be unfair to criticize it as if it were a piece of original political theory. But I doubt whether it performs its avowed function particularly well, so uncomfortable is the relationship between learned analysis, quick synopsis and genuine interrogation of legal theory. The overwhelming impression is of a book which traces the "naturalist" tradition without much regard for the merits of any of its members' ideas.

## Pioneers of the Inns of Court

E. W. Ives

J. H. BAKER  
The Legal Profession and the Common Law:  
Historical essays  
495pp. Hambledon. £25.  
0907628621  
WILFRID R. PREST  
The Rise of the Barristers: A social history of  
the English Bar, 1590-1640  
442pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £35.  
0198217641

In a season when historical study wilts before the chill blast of the prevailing educational climate, legal history refuses to succumb. The revival of support for the subject in the past twenty-five years shows no sign of slackening - the area of interest is enlarged, approaches become more sophisticated, and output, both of books and articles, mounts steadily.

The apostle of much of this revival has been J. H. Baker, and the appearance of a collection of his essays, including some previously unpublished, is a landmark of progress to date. The development of the subject can be charted in the essays, the most substantial and coherent group being concerned with the late medieval and early modern legal profession. This is the area of the greatest recent advance, and the one where advances are likely to prove enduring.

Material which appears here for the first time provides the latest assessment of that vexed question, the origin of the learning exercises in the Inns of Court and Chancery. If Dr Baker is correct, these may be a good deal older than I and others have thought. Two manuscripts at Cambridge establish that by about 1340 some kind of formal discussion of the statutes was taking place among the lawyers practising at the royal courts, and Baker clearly believes that here we have at least part of the protoplasm which evolved into the later pattern of law readings at the Inns of Court. This early legal training was based on contemporary university practice - the "missing link" so often suspected - but there is a possibility of an even earlier connection with the discussions which produced the thirteenth-century *Casus Placitorum*.

One of the pieces which Baker reprints is his seminal demonstration that the current hot potato of British legal practice, the separate status of barristers, was first defined in the late 15th c. Who comprised this newly emerging senior branch, is the theme of Wilfrid R. Prest's latest book, *The Rise of the Barristers: A social history of the English Bar, 1590-1640*, which is based on a biographical study of the careers of the 385 benchers elected in the Inns of Court in that period, plus a random 5 per cent of barristers - a total sample of 500. A social survey of the group is followed by discussions of professional advancement, religious persuasion, political allegiance, public image and morality. The whole is backed up by ninety pages of tables and appendices, including biographical data on the benchers and brief notes on the barristers. The annotation is impressive. *The Rise of the Barristers* is an innovative and fundamental contribution to the history of the legal profession and it becomes the new base for future enquiry.

That said, there are less satisfactory features to the book. It is the first of the Oxford Studies in Social History, and sometimes almost sinks under the weight of obligatory sociological theory. Even so, the book fails to tackle the theoretical problem of counter-factuality. If we are to be told that advantageous marriage was a major factor in a lawyer's success, we need also to be told about the profits which marriage could bring to non-lawyers - and the more so since Dr Prest argues that by no means all of a successful lawyer's income came from his fees. Again, the sample is statistically foul-proof, but it fails to allow sufficiently for the factor of time: 28 per cent of the benchers studied had built their careers before 1590, and 25 per cent of the barristers were still very junior in 1640. Thus, rather than a study of the rise of the barristers, what we have is an examination of a fifty-year cross-section of the bar. Only by using a different technique - following to the end of their careers men in the cohort called to the bar between 1585 and 1625 - would we be able to tell how (if at all) the pre-Civil War *tranche* of lawyers was distinguished from those who came before and after.

As it is, Prest seems often to overstate the contrast between his sample and what we already know of earlier lawyers. It is no real

## PENGUIN CLASSICS



ἔκ λεχέων, πᾶσι δ' ἄγαυοῦ Τιθ  
ἴν' ἄθροον ὡς φέροι  
δ' ἔπειτα θοὰς ἐπὶ  
τὰ χερσὶ  
τεῖ νηὶ μ  
ιεν ἀμφ  
χμωνιά

...the translator's art.



# A taste for extremes

## Julian Symons

GEORGE MACBETH  
A Child of the War  
188pp, Cape, £10.95.  
02241024361

The jacket shows a young boy and his parents: the boy smiling and eagerly expectant, the father frowning, mouth firmly set and in appearance extremely tough, spectacled mother looking easy, pleasant, rather elegant. The time is the end of the 1930s or perhaps early in the Second World War and the photograph shows very well the qualities of George MacBeth senior and his wife, as their son describes them. The elder George had begun as a miner in his native Scotland, moved down to Yorkshire when taken on as a draughtsman by an engineering firm, and eventually had supervisory control of a drawing office at the handsome salary of £750 a year. He appears forceful, confident, an awkward man to cross. Amelia Morton Mary Mann, his wife, was an antique-dealer's daughter, owner of a street of mouldering houses in Hamilton, and several notches above her husband in the social scale. She was, however, content with life in what her son calls the middle-middle class, although the definition is as shaky as similar ones made by Orwell. Can it be called characteristic of a middle-middle class family to have had a car but no telephone, like the MacBeths?

George junior (b 1932) lived a secure, happy family life in Sheffield up to the age of nine, a life that was shattered when his father was killed in 1941 by a British anti-aircraft shell which failed to explode in the air. Three years later the boy had rheumatic fever, spent several months in hospital, and remained for some

years an invalid. In 1951, when he was about to take up a scholarship in Oxford, his mother died from cirrhosis of the liver.

The memoir has two distinct kinds of interest, the one implied in the title, and the effect of childhood and adolescent enthusiasms on the personality of George MacBeth, poet and prose writer. "A child of the War", yes, MacBeth was that, but what must strike a reader is how little the war touched him until his father's death. There was rationing, but at least in the early years it was not severe. A gas-mask had to be carried to school every day, but school went on with the usual minor battles in which George readily joined the calls himself "the George Raft of the violent clique" and gives a vigorous account of "pilling", the practice of grabbing and squeezing testicles). The family was not split up, and its fortunes flourished. The intense feeling MacBeth has for this first decade of his life is reflected in his retention of many of its artefacts. A mechanical robin that nodded and pecked, cigarette cards collected from his father's two packets a day, the Coronation mug given to all school children, are still in his possession, along with his father's set of drawing implements and the patents he took out for a collapsible pit prop and a special pulley, which are now framed on the wall of his son's study. Even the land-mine that dropped at the end of the garden and tore out doors, broke furniture and shattered windows was only a temporary nuisance, and within six months the family were back in their home again.

The boy's immunity from the deeper stresses of war ended with his father's death. The most memorable portrait in the volume is that of George senior, a picture all the more impressive because his son is aware that he writes with incomplete knowledge, that there were aspects of his father's character, and perhaps impor-

tant facets of his life, about which the boy knew nothing. MacBeth, whose gifts as a writer do not generally include effective understatement, manages it successfully here. His father was a Lieutenant in the Home Guard, and heard an air raid warning. "He went out, not too late in the evening, and walked towards the office. I don't know whether he ever got there . . . But he never came back."

The second half of the book loses something of intensity, although the accounts of the boy's understanding that he would never play games after he recovered from rheumatic fever ("from that day on my foot would never touch a football again"), and of the family house's dismantling after his mother's death are as poignant as anything in the story. Again physical relics are retained, like his mother's recipe book and her crocodile skin handbag. The success of George junior's courting days at Oxford was perhaps enhanced by the fact that he wore his father's spats.

One of the book's greatest virtues is the implicit revelation of the effect that these tragically early deaths, and his own severe youthful illness, had on the writer's personality. He evolved, perhaps consciously, a dramatic and self-dramatizing figure, who faced the world with a desire to "indulge the life of the senses in oriental splendour while discoursing in the thin accents of Puritan zeal", as the dust-wrapper of one of his poetic collections puts it. This attitude-shielding figure was no doubt created partly as a shield against the hurts George MacBeth suffered in his first two decades. It was marked by a desire for extremes, interest in physical pain, determination to defeat physical weakness and admiration for strength and success. A friend at school is said to have shown a "will of steel" by charring his flesh with a lighted match, in his mid-twenties MacBeth defies a supposed heart weakness by climbing Mount Parnassus and

then walking twenty miles, a few years earlier he runs a successful small business selling glassware and butcher's knives. The kind of mark death and destruction made on him, and the attraction they held, is shown also in his work. An early poem, "The Knives", is about the writer's possession of "four knives that were made for killing". One is "a neat little scissor for sitting, / An adam's apple", a throwing knife has "dried blood on the blunt edge". Even in this memoir the image found for a permanent childhood scar is that it looks like the lightning flash of the SS.

For the most part, however, the George MacBeth who was drawn compulsively towards death and destruction, edited a collection of Sick Verse and had his "Doomsday Show" performed at the Establishment, has moved into quiet middle age, in which he values Victorian styles if not Victorian values. The interest is shown in novels like his *Dizzy's Woman*, and his admiration for Victorian fiction done in verse is characteristically extreme. In his introduction to the *Penguin Book of Victorian Verse* he says that Browning is possibly "the most effective creator of character in English, after Dickens and Shakespeare", and praises the verse fiction of "Evans, Lee-Hamilton, Brown, Dobson, Meredith, Morris and Newbolt", regretting that they were "for many years sunk into the slough of abysmal neglect". Where, in spite of his best efforts, most of them remain. He has always shown interest in such minor Nineties figures as the sickly Eugene Lee-Hamilton, an invalid who spent twenty years on a wheeled bed suffering from what may have been purely hysterical paralysis. It would not be at all surprising if George MacBeth's next work, after this delicate and affecting memoir, was a novel in verse about a Nineties figure, perhaps the short life and lingering death of Aubrey Beardsley.

# Like nobody's business

## E. S. Turner

WILLIAM NORRIS  
The Man Who Fell from the Sky  
262pp, Viking, £10.95.  
0670136949

In the 1920s Captain Alfred Loewenstein was the Great Gatsby of Thorpe Satchville, in the Melton Mowbray hunting country. Hugely rich, indiscriminate in his hospitality, he basked in an ambiguous war-time reputation; one rumour said he had "offered to buy back Belgium from the occupying Germans", which would have been no small feat for a Whitehall quartermaster. Whereas Gatsby ended up floating in a swimming-pool at West Egg, Loewenstein was found floating in the North Sea, having fallen from his private aircraft on a flight to Brussels in 1928. Was it suicide? Was it an accident? Was he pushed?

Nearly sixty years on, William Norris explores the mystery in the confidential, come-doorstepping-with-me style now favoured by investigators of real-life riddles. "Advance praise" for this book comes from Sidney Kirkpatrick, who recently probed the puzzling death, in 1922, of William Desmond Taylor, the Hollywood director (*A Cast of Killers*). "Authors make great detectives", enthuses Kirkpatrick, which is as shaky a proposition as "Detectives make great authors".

Loewenstein, we are told, "embraced the twentieth century like a lover". His financial wheeling and dealing began before 1914. It was, not, however, until the 1920s that "the nuclear device that was Alfred Loewenstein seemed to reach critical mass", meaning that he then exploded into fame as possibly the third richest man in the world. The "Belgian Croesus" was a master of the flotation, the cartel, the merger and the new-fangled concept of the holding company; his interests included Brazilian traction, British artificial silk and Belgian banking.

On his last flight Loewenstein took off in his Fokker monoplane with a pilot, co-pilot, male secretary, valet and two typists. If he was murdered – and Norris is soon convinced that he was – all must have been in on the plot, or had guilty knowledge or suspicions; in which event

typists in those days were a harder breed than one had supposed. After the tycoon's disappearance various young men with inquiring minds went up in Fokkers and tried to open the passenger door against the slipstream, but failed. The police of Belgium and Britain did not greatly stretch themselves to solve the riddle; what happened in the air over international waters was nobody's business.

The book sheds entertaining light on the excesses of the 1920s. A supreme vulgarian, Loewenstein was said to have bought Hispano-Suiza limousines by the dozen at a discount, reselling any he did not need at the full price. He owned eight villas in Biarritz and would book as many suites on an ocean liner. Much of the tale, however, is an account of market machinations and it takes stamina to keep up with the financial plot. The task is made no easier by the American printers, who seem to lack a £ sign; instead of "£20,000" we are given, ridiculously, "20,000 pounds", as if the deals were in avoidpounds. To a large extent the author works from newspaper files. On the practical side he pays a useful visit with a tape measure to an aviation museum in Holland, seeking to establish a physical means by which fool play might have been facilitated. He succeeds, astonishingly, in tracing the pilot's widow, who still had the business memos the financier was scribbling in flight. In the matey fashion of such investigations he tells how, on leaving a public house in Thorpe Satchville to interview ancient inhabitants, he seeks a peppermint to spare old ladies any beefy fumes. Surprisingly, he even reproduces the devious sort of letter he writes to encourage ostlers to talk. There were times, Norris says, when he wondered why he ever set off on an apparent wild-goose chase. The answer is obvious: he could see there was a good lively book in it and that he had lit on a real Class A mystery.

Many people, not least his fellow financiers, detested Loewenstein, though not enough perhaps to want to murder him. Since this is essentially a whodunit, it would be unfair to name Mr Norris's prime suspect. He ends in the manner of a judge charging a jury and asks "Was – guilty of the crime? The answer must be a resounding 'Not proven', for of hanging evidence there is absolutely none. Or, to borrow a word from the author, ZZZ."

# Bubbling over

## Jill Neville

MAYA ANGELOU  
All God's Children Need Travelling Shoes  
208pp, Virago, Paperback, £3.95.  
0860687570

Maya Angelou's endlessly spun-out autobiography, now at Volume Five, has a bounce and charm that can even sustain the reader through pages of Honourable Mentions to all her back colleagues. She relates long-varnished conversations in rollicking detail, drawing generously, one suspects, on artistic licence rather than total recall. Her special gift for sparkling yet relaxed imagery urges the reader ever onward. But it must be said that as the carousel of her life speeds up, her record of it becomes less compelling. I know *Why the Caged Bird Sings* is the first and best volume, followed by *Gather Together in My Name*, which covers her years as a prostitute and waitress and has slightly less pain and resonance. Volume Three, *Singin' and Swingin' and Gettin' Merry Like Christmas* is about her travels abroad as a singer; Four, *The Heart of a Woman*, deals with her political awakening during the 1960s; *All God's Children Need Travelling Shoes* is an account of a busy sojourn in Ghana. She joined a small band of American blacks who, entranced by the rhetoric of Malcolm X, yearned to find their African roots. There is a marvellous episode when they stand together outside the American Embassy in Accra jeering at the flag, but eventually realize that they are all as American as apple pie.

As success accelerates, events cast a shorter shadow. Everything Angelou touches upon is a success: singing, acting, writing, and above all the upbringing of her son Guy. Lovens and husbands come and go and she is very American lodged in her way of dropping them when the romance and thrill are gone. She falls at first sight for a house-dealer from Zaire, who sends a matchmaker over to her restaurant table. But it is no easier for her to become the respectable wife-number-two of an African trader than it is for her to write a dreary paragraph. Like all the other men in her life he is unable to

hem her in. Only her son really matters to her. "If I failed in that role, success in any other area would have little meaning." Around her eddy the colour and rush and flower-and-sewer smells of Ghana during its optimistic phase. People stopped each other in the street and said, "Oh, but life is sweet, oh, and the air is cool on my skin like fresh water."

Angelou hears about the "Beantos", people who have been to England and America and who cannot stop boasting about it. There is an attempt on President Nkrumah's life and foreigners like herself are suspected. A body lies unclaimed in the morgue for more than two days; this features as a big news story because it has never happened before. Is Ghana becoming callous like Europe, the citizens of Accra wonder. At last a family arrives to claim the body and Changelians breathe the more easily.

Before Angelou leaves Ghana she senses the exact placing of her ancestral roots, or rather where they were ripped from the earth by slave-traders. This curious incident is redolent of reincarnation and somehow completely plausible. White-created black insecurity is always present under the author's zippy surface. "Black and brown skins did not herald debasement and a divinely created inferiority. We were capable of controlling our cities, ourselves and our lives with elegance and success. Whites were not needed to explain the workings of the world, nor the mysteries of the mind." But in Ghana for the first time "we could not lay any social unhappiness or personal failure at the door of colour prejudice."

Angelou's prose is always on the airy side, making light of boredom and difficulty. Even so, it is hard to see how she can profess that she had not noticed how many times she had moved Guy from school to school. Occasionally she seems to err on the side of sentimental black agit-prop, but in the end she bubbles over with the realization that issues are not as clear-cut as she once liked to think. Her charm and growing success naturally involve her in ways in the hub of things. One gets an impression of unutterable strength under all the sassiness. She is wholly persuasive as the one-parent mother who succeeded in bringing up her son and paying all the bills, and who, with her talent, would have been praised as a writer even if she were white.

# Essentially feminine

## Kathleen Adler

NANCY MOWLL MATHEWS  
Mary Cassatt  
160pp, New York: Abrams, \$35.  
0810907933  
MARGARET B. RENNOLDS (Editor)  
National Museum of Women in the Arts  
253pp, New York: Abrams, \$35.  
0810913739

Born in 1844, Mary Cassatt spent part of her childhood in Paris and in Germany with her parents and her four siblings, before settling in Philadelphia, where she enrolled at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts at the minimum age of sixteen. Unlike women students in Paris, who were barred from the École des Beaux-Arts until 1897, Cassatt was able to follow the same course of instruction as her male peers, including the attendance of life drawing classes. On returning to Paris in 1866, she was obliged to pursue such limited avenues of training as were open to her: she copied in the Louvre, enrolled in the studio of the fashionable portraitist Charles Chaplin, and took private lessons from Gérôme. Nancy Mowll Mathews shows Cassatt both to have been single-minded in her determination to become a painter, and to have been rarely privileged in

her striving to attain this goal. Her family, particularly her mother, were encouraging, money was no object, and the strictures that so bound young French women, like her Impressionist colleague Berthe Morisot, barely affected Cassatt as she and her friend Emily Sartain travelled in Europe.

Ms Mathews's handsomely produced monograph on Cassatt is divided into four chronological sections. Of these sections, the first, "The Early Period (1860-1876)", is the most successful in that it is here that Mathews's failure to establish the wider artistic context in which Cassatt worked is least significant. Much of the painter's work during this period has a Spanish flavour, for example the jaunty "Toreador Lighting a Cigarette" of 1873. The second section of the book, covering the "Impressionist Years (1877-1886)", chronicles Cassatt's decision to accept the invitation of Degas to join the Impressionists, and her commitment to the idea of independent exhibitions from this point. Mathews accepts uncritically Cassatt's remark to her biographer Achille Segard in 1912: "I accepted with joy. I hated conventional art. I began to live." In the absence of documentation for this period, she relies on speculation about Cassatt's state of mind. Looking at the 1877 independent exhibition, for instance, she claims that Cassatt "must have realized that she had a lot of work

to do before next year's exhibition", but she does not define what other artists, specifically Degas, were attempting in their art, nor does she outline current artistic debates about naturalism.

It was in the late 1870s that Cassatt produced several views of women at the theatre. While some, like "The Loge", present the women as desirable objects to be admired, "In the Box" and "At the Opera" depict women turning their opera-glasses on male members of the audience. Comparative illustrations would have been pertinent here, but while the range of Cassatt's work is revealed and extremely well reproduced, the tiny illustration of Degas's aquint of Cassatt in the Etruscan Gallery at the Louvre is one of only four examples of work other than Cassatt's own in the book. Where Mathews cites other artists, the connection is not convincing: Cassatt's small drypoint of 1889, "Woman with a Parrot", can surely not be seen, as Mathews claims, as "a down-to-earth translation of the same theme by Manet and Courbet painted in 1866".

The final sections of the monograph discuss Cassatt's huge mural, "Modern Woman", for the Woman's Building of the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893; her prolific output of pastels, drawings and drypoints of children, much in demand and often sold unfinished to dealers such as Ambroise

Vollard; and her last years when her declining eyesight halted her production some time before her death in 1926. A splendid visual introduction to the artist's work, *Mary Cassatt* is disappointing for the more specialized reader in its refusal to engage with critical issues.

The National Museum of Women in the Arts opened in Washington recently, and the publication of a lavish catalogue illustrating a selection from the collection, which ranges from the sixteenth-century Italian painter Lavinia Fontana's "Portrait of a Noblewoman", elaborately dressed and bejewelled, fondling a small dog, to contemporary American artists such as Nancy Graves's abstract collage-like work "Rheo", marks its inauguration. This is the collection of Wallace and Wilhelmina Holladay, and it comprises paintings, sculptures and many graphic works. It encompasses a tiny, delicate watercolour and pencil study by Gwen John of a "Seated Woman" and a huge and bizarre photorealist work of a woman adorned with a gypsy star on her forehead by the American painter Audrey Flack: the only common denominator is gender. The book is introduced by a brief essay by Alessandra Comini, who manages tactfully to raise issues such as ghettoization and the assumption of an "essential feminine", which are among the difficulties inherent in this venture.

# On a darkling plain

## Anna Adams

PETER FULLER  
The Australian Scapegoat: Towards an antipodean aesthetic  
69pp, Nedlands: Western Australian University Press, Paperback, £3.95.  
0855642459

The *Australian Scapegoat* contains the texts of three lectures delivered in Australia by Peter Fuller, preceded by an introduction on a more personal level. It also contains an appendix which summarizes the French critical reaction to the Australian exhibition in Paris in 1983 as well as a foreword by Bernard Smith which charts earlier visits to Australia by Kenneth Clark, Herbert Read and Clement Greenberg.

The title of the collection is based on a glimpse of outback landscape which Fuller caught from a Land Rover window when travelling with a zoologist friend. "A mangy sheep stood in a landscape of skulls and dry red sand. Don said exactly what I was thinking . . . 'The Scapegoat'." Fuller goes on to say that in his opinion Australian painters were in a unique position to pick up the threads at exactly the point where British "Higher Landscape" had become evacuated, and failed, in the mid-nineteenth century. For the Australian land-

scape painter is compelled to begin with a conspicuously godless, intractable terrain. The British "higher landscape" failed, Fuller thinks, because after Darwin it was no longer believed that God made the world. Landscape was, therefore, no longer a sacred subject, and landscape painting dwindled into topography.

As an atheist and a Marxist, psychoanalytical art critic, Fuller believes that art is of concern to all men and women because it relates to our fundamental experiences. He also believes that the "aesthetic dimension", peculiar to human consciousness, is the one wherein we find life's meaning. In his first lecture, taking Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach" as his text, he attempts "to evoke the ways in which the long withdrawing roar of the Sea of Faith reveals naked shingles and a darkling plain." The second lecture, delivered in 1984, compares George Orwell's vision of the future with that of William Morris in *News from Nowhere*. (Morris, who saw the ethical and aesthetic objections to industrial capitalism, is one of Fuller's heroes, though he admits that the sweet reasonableness of the simple – but over-decorated – society he describes might be difficult to live with.) The third lecture discusses the tension between provincialism and internationalism, and concludes that internationalism is provincialism, for it is always looking over its shoulder.

Australian painters such as Sidney Nolan, Arthur Boyd, Fred Williams and Godfrey Miller were doing very well in the 1960s when Fuller, as a boy of fourteen, saw the exhibition of their work at the Whitechapel Gallery. It seemed then that something significant and original had arrived, and though the paintings showed a strange and unyielding terrain, they were of compelling strength and had evident meaning for people with no direct experience of Australia. But exhibitions of Australian art in the 1980s, Fuller says, have been blighted by "pseudo-internationalism" and the mindless use of the camera. He writes with passionate anger of the floating mass of current art for which he has coined the acronym BICCA, short for Biennale-International-Club-Class-Art. Nevertheless he seeks cause for hope, both in the revival of interest in drawing and painting, and in the thought of Gregory Bateson who has recognized that "if nature is not the product of mind, then mind itself is in some sense the product of nature and is therefore immanent in the evolutionary structure – and objectively discernible outside of ourselves". Therefore landscape and natural forms can again become sacred subjects.

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ing". But her case would have had much more authority if it had rested on the contemporary reviews in which Degas's critics actually identified his nudes as whores, instead of on her dubious concoction of facts about the washing habits of women in France at the time – prostitutes she claims, washed a lot, but respectable women did not. Equally, she makes some telling comparisons between Degas's austere unerotic images and the soft-core pornography of popular representations of the Parisian *blanchisseuse*. But a balanced view is only possible when "mainstream" realist paintings are brought into the discussion. In comparison with a contemporary like Bonvin, who also painted laundresses, Degas emerges as a less committed documentary artist than she claims. And the parallels with Zola, whose *L'Assommoir* centres on the life of a laundress, reveal just how selective and abstracted Degas's vision really was.

Eunice Lipton is concerned primarily with Degas's depictions of women in the context of the complex social, political and artistic mores of the period. An area of his work which should have provided her with an inexhaustible field of inquiry is his exceptionally subtle and penetrating portrayal of the women he knew. The fact that she actually dismisses these portraits as "irrelevant" to her discussion is rather typical of her book as a whole.

# Never enough

## Norbert Lynton

OSKAR KOKOSCHKA  
Briefe III: 1934-1953  
Edited by Oda Kokoschka and Heinz Spielmann  
370pp, Düsseldorf: Claassen, DM68.  
3546455843

The Second World War was a humiliating period for Oskar Kokoschka. His self-regard held up ("there is no great painter today other than myself", he wrote in 1947), but few in Britain wanted his art or his instruction. Prague, where he had been from 1934 until then, had felt cosmopolitan. He had painted President Masaryk and harangued him about Comenius's ideas on education. London, "which serves the English in place of a metropolis", gave him no opportunities to shine or to persuade. The British lack culture as they lack sunshine, he wrote to Schoenberg; there is no soil for art to root in. Two months earlier he had written to Augustus John exclaiming at the "tremendous revival" in the arts, reminiscent of "my old Austria", but at the time he had wanted to elicit John's support of his request

Johannes Vermeer



# The ephemerality of translation

Roy Harris asks why translations need to be so often replaced, and suggests that the ephemerality of late twentieth-century translation is of a different order altogether from that of earlier periods.

Translation has proliferated since 1945 on a scale probably unprecedented in the history of Western culture: a proliferation sufficient to devalue the product and generate a predictable reaction. In the good old days, cynics sometimes suggest, translations were made to last. Why in this degenerate age is the demand for new translations as constant as the demand for new clothes? Not necessarily because the old ones are worn threadbare, or because we have grown out of them; nor are the new ones demonstrably more durable or more stylish than their predecessors. The invited inference is that the modern multiplicity of translations is simply part of the endless cycle of mass consumption of cheap cultural goods which characterizes our society.

Put-down explanations of this kind are not easily dismissed. In part today's incessant turnover of new translations doubtless reflects conditions of book production and market forces which did not obtain when Aristotle translated Aristotle or Dryden Virgil. Doubtless, too, translation today is one of the communicational lifelines of our global village. But there must be more to it than that.

Obsolescence is an aspect of translation about which translation theorists tell us very little, and none of it fully satisfactory. We are fobbed off with stories about changes in language and literary fashion, which would apply to any text whether it were a translation or not. It is true enough that no one would nowadays describe Hector in Pope's words as "more than mortal strength," or select English rhyming couplets as just the right metre for conveying the sustained and sweeping movement of Homeric verse. But arguably Pope's verse has dated by just about the right amount (for modern ears) to give it the patina appropriate to Homer's archaic Greek. Such a patina would surely be preferable to the self-conscious archaizing which Arnold dubbed "newmanization". We are left with the frustrated feeling that problem and explanation just do not fit. It is all too tempting to sublimate the dissatisfaction by conjuring up the vague ideal of a "definitive" translation, something the best translations we can think of approximate to but never quite reach: a version impervious to the passage of years, which could not be superseded. Its timelessness would match and so enshrine the timelessness of the original text. Such an ideal, however, is not merely a contradiction in terms, but something infinitely worse: a standing invitation to misconceive translation.

It takes an experienced traveller in the realms of gold to distinguish that particular form of deception from the more widely denounced heresy, which would supposedly mislead us into taking the translation as offering an equivalent to the original. A cultural tradition in which translators are standardly denigrated as traitors encourages this confusion, along with related misconceptions which cumulatively make it wellnigh impossible for translation to get a fair hearing. If traitors deserve shooting anyway, why bother about the niceties of their transgressions or the shortcomings of their nefarious works?

Imperfect though most translations may be, there is a point about obsolescence worth making, and even worth dressing up as a paradox. The mark of a perfect translation would not be its perennality, far from it. The more perfect the translation the more absolute its ephemerality.

Perennality of a superficial sort can still be bought fairly cheaply. For example, it is beyond the march of time to outdate a translation of the *Dhagavad Gita* which gives us, as Prabhavanandini and Isherwood's does, such lines as: "You must know that whatever belongs to the states of *sattwa*, *rajas* and *manas*, proceeds from me." But that is because, the translators have shirked the responsibility of paying us in honest verbal currency, and passed us the dud cheque of footnotes rather than risk English equivalents for those three mystical Hindu forces. Depending on how you

look at it, this is either perfect, timeless translation, or no translation at all.

More plausible counter-examples which at first sight puncture the paradox of ephemerality spring readily to mind. Everything depends, we shall be told, on the subject-matter. Why would anyone need a new translation of Justinian's Digest or the cookery book of Apicius? The provisions of Roman law or Roman recipes, however obsolete, do not alter. We may find them unpalatable in various respects, and their underlying assumptions are based on historical conditions which we have to understand. But once correctly translated, should we not expect the translation to stand the test of time?

Such an expectation already begs a crucial question of translation theory. It is interesting to read the most recent translations of Apicius on the efforts of their only known English precursor, a cook by profession. Terms, they say, which lie

did not understand are – without much regard to rules of textual criticism – replaced by others which looked more likely to him. This method was bound to lead him astray even on culinary matters. To give an example: disregarding all the literary evidence, he boldly claims that *garum* is a fish sauce of which little is known, whereas *fishum* simply denotes any kind of liquid, and may therefore be translated as the oceanic requires by "broth" or "stock" or "court-bouillon".

So being a professional cook, it seems, is the worst possible qualification for translating a cookbook: you may think your knowledge of the subject takes priority over a knowledge of the language. This is rather like claiming that it is preferable for a cartographer to understand the principles of projection than to be familiar with the terrain.

An erroneous translation, to be sure, will always invite replacement. When Chapman mangles Homer, as he sometimes does, through misplaced confidence in the Latin version of Sponadanus, then his translation needs revision. Even Chapman nods. But revising Chapman is not to be equated with retranslating the *Iliad*. It has nothing to do with the problem of obsolescence. That problem only comes into view when we start asking "Can a (good) translation become a poor translation in the course of time?" If so, then perhaps Chapman's mistranslations might, with good luck, turn into good translations eventually.

Received wisdom has it that language is constantly changing, and English translators, at least from Caxton onwards, have always tended to see linguistic change as the chief obstacle to contend with. They have seen it, furthermore, as an obstacle which guarantees that sooner or later the soundest of translations will come to the end of its useful life. Caxton confesses that when asked to revise the language of some "olde englysshe" documents he found the task beyond him: "I coude not reduce ne bryngie it to be understonden". The English of his own translation of *Eneydos* was doomed to a similar fate. In principle, however, this kind of obsolescence takes us no further than acknowledging the necessity for periodic linguistic revisions of a translation. It does not take us as far as positing the need for a retranslation. What exactly is the difference?

As George Washington Moon, that acerbic and much neglected critic of Bible translators, once pointed out, it may matter a great deal whether one presents the Revised Version as a new translation of the Holy Scriptures, or whether one presents it as the Authorized Version with some 30,000 corrections. (Any university enlightened enough to introduce a course on the sociology of translation would do well to place Moon's masterpieces of invective *The Revisers' English* and *The Bishop's English* alongside Etienne Dolet and George Campbell as prescribed texts on the syllabus.)

What substantive issue could possibly turn in the finicky distinction between "retranslation" and "revision"? One need only look back to the polemics which reverberated through Victorian England on the question of which version of the Bible was to be used in church. No less important in that missionary age was whether the Revised Version could be accepted as authentic under the statutes of the British and Foreign Bible Society. For it makes a difference whether translation, think I, is translation of the New Testament will be read only by those whose native language is English.

In a sociolinguistic context in which English is on the way to becoming an international language, it is neither hypercritical nor facetious to point out, as Moon does, that anyone who renders the Greek of John 1:6 as "There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John" is inviting half the world to believe in a divinity called John.

Modern translation theorists prefer to put changes in translation under the microscope of stylistic analysis. Moon's example, as it happens, has also more recently been seized upon by Eugene A. Nida, who draws our attention to four translations of the same verse. The American Standard Version of 1901 retains the King James wording of 1611: "There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John". The Revised Standard Version of 1946 alters this to: "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John". Phillips's New Testament of 1958 says: "A man named John was sent by God". The New English Bible of 1961 reads: "There appeared a man named John sent from God". When these four versions are submitted to Nida's complex evaluation, based on deviation from a hypothetical "minimal transfer" procedure from Greek into modern English, duly "weighted" for relative importance, it emerges that Phillips represents the most radically innovative translation, followed by the New English Bible. So far, so good. But one might also add: so what? Stylistic grading exercises give us no purchase at all on the question of whether later translations changed in response to considerations of the kind which exercised George Washington Moon.

How many luckless heathen actually ended up as worshippers of a non-existent deity John is neither here nor there. To grasp the validity of Moon's point is to see that the problem of obsolescence is not confined to cases in which linguistic evolution had made an earlier translation read awkwardly or nonsensically. What changes need be neither the language nor the interpretation of the original text, but simply the communicational task of the translator.

A translation may need replacing, then, for reasons unconnected with the fact that linguistic change has rendered some of its terms incomprehensible or archaic and its style old-fashioned, stiff and stilted. It may need replacing because its audience has changed. But what may also change over the years, and change independently of any of the factors so far mentioned, is the concept of translation. Here we begin to get to the heart of the question of obsolescence, and what is needed goes beyond any reviser's remedy.

Those inclined to doubt whether the concept of translation (as distinct from acceptable styles of translation) has ever really changed may argue that all translation involves, in whatever degree or manner is deemed appropriate, fidelity to the original. But the notion of fidelity to an original is itself problematic, and the problems by no means confined to translation or to the literary arts. An example for comparison, which also brings out how culture-bound are concepts of mimesis, is provided by Sir Thomas Roe's anecdote about the emperor Jahangir's court painter. When challenged to produce a copy of a European original which would be indistinguishable from it, the Mughal artist painted a version of the subject quite brilliant in its own terms, but which failed to deceive the English ambassador. The court painter's notion of copying "indistinguishably" was evidently to render the composition and modelling of the original exactly, but to execute it pictorially as if it were a Mughal painting.

Our modern translators' notion of fidelity to the original text (J. G. Weightman has argued, became firmly established only relatively recently in cultural history – perhaps during the past hundred years or so. The thesis may be difficult to sustain in quite such a bald form, although Weightman cites evidence which cannot be gainsaid. It includes Florio's translation of Montaigne, North's Plutarch, and French eighteenth-century versions of Shakespeare, where various details of the action of the plays were altered to suit contemporary French taste. (This is rather like the piquant example of the Boston Museum's seventeenth-century Indian copy of Cornelius Coy's engraving of the Birth of the Virgin, where the artist introduces patterns on the red gowns, presumably to conform to Mughal standards of what

bed linen ought to be.) There is no doubt that Weightman is right, at least to the following extent. The dividing line between what is accepted as translation and what is regarded as adaptation may shift in the course of time. Or it may simply not be clearly drawn at all at certain periods.

In turn, fluctuations in this dividing line may be determined by social factors which translators themselves are not conscious of and which modern translation theory has not even begun to weigh. Thus when Caxton says "I have but followed my copye in Frenshe as nygh as me is possyble" the interesting question is not whether he always did, which we shall never know. Rather, the interesting questions are how nygh this proclaimed criterion takes him; and what that concept of fidelity to the original tells us about the cultural context within which Caxton was working.

Similarly, when Dryden, *qua* translation theorist, distinguishes between metaphrase, paraphrase and imitation, and overtly aims to make Virgil speak such English as Virgil would himself have spoken had he been born in England "and in this present age", it would be folly to ask whether Dryden succeeded. The question is unanswerable. A more profitable inquiry is where he got this notion from, and what it tells us about the conceptual framework within which we have to situate Dryden's view of language.

All this throws intermittent light on any demand for new translations. But it does not explain why, for instance, between 1947 and 1972 there were no less than eleven German translations of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, nor why between 1949 and 1969 there were at least eight English translations of *Madame Bovary*.

Translating Wilde or Flaubert into another modern European language is, after all, a relatively straightforward enterprise. It is not like the nightmare of cultural anisomorphism which lies in wait for the European translator of Basho or the *Rig Veda*. What kind of phenomenon, then, is this apparently pointless and endless succession of new translations? It can be argued that translation has always been characterized by its ephemerality, but that its ephemerality has simply become more conspicuous in modern times because of conditions favouring the commissioning and publication of more translations. There is also a quite separate case for the claim that the ephemerality of later twentieth-century translation is of a different order altogether from that of previous periods. The key to that difference was a critical mutation in the twentieth century's criteria of textual identity. What changed was not the concept of translation as such (which had always fluctuated between specifiable extremes, at least in European literature) but rather the concept of a text *simpliciter*. Post-war translation was done by and for a generation which, consciously or unconsciously, had already absorbed the lessons of structuralism.

Once the long-entrenched Western concept of a language had at last been turned inside out by Saussure, new and searching questions were bound to be asked concerning the status of texts and their interrelations. Structuralism brought a new emphasis on the uniqueness of every text and of every language. At the same time, the historical transmission of a text from one generation to the next became part of diachronic linguistics, and its translation a point of contact between one synchronic cultural system and another. The dialectic of structuralism is based on an opposition between the ephemerality of *parole* and the immutability of *langue*. The idea that a text *qua parole* can be related to other texts only through the structures of *langue* simultaneously subverts the old views of translation and projects a new one. It undermines all earlier notions of obsolescence, and of fidelity to the original. The professional rhetoric of fidelity carries on, but comes to be interpreted in the light of a new sense of unretranslatability. Translation is dead: long live translation. Translation is dead because interlingual equivalence is an illusion. Translation is immediately reborn because the primacy of synchrony makes bilingualism possible.

This neonate translation, however, comes to terms with its own ephemerality by recognizing that it has no claim to validity other than as a historical statement, and like all historical statements, it is subject to revision.

On the long-entrenched Western concept of a language had at last been turned inside out by Saussure, new and searching questions were bound to be asked concerning the status of texts and their interrelations. Structuralism brought a new emphasis on the uniqueness of every text and of every language. At the same time, the historical transmission of a text from one generation to the next became part of diachronic linguistics, and its translation a point of contact between one synchronic cultural system and another. The dialectic of structuralism is based on an opposition between the ephemerality of *parole* and the immutability of *langue*. The idea that a text *qua parole* can be related to other texts only through the structures of *langue* simultaneously subverts the old views of translation and projects a new one. It undermines all earlier notions of obsolescence, and of fidelity to the original. The professional rhetoric of fidelity carries on, but comes to be interpreted in the light of a new sense of unretranslatability. Translation is dead: long live translation. Translation is dead because interlingual equivalence is an illusion. Translation is immediately reborn because the primacy of synchrony makes bilingualism possible.

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## Letters

### V.S. Naipaul

Sir, – I have just finished reading with mounting astonishment Peter Kemp's appraisal of V.S. Naipaul, in the guise of a review of *The Enigma of Arrival* and a recent academic study of Naipaul (August 7). The concerns and biases Mr Kemp plucks from Naipaul's books – their moroseness, their vision of political catastrophe, their repeated featuring of lonely, isolated characters – hardly constitute the overwhelming case against Naipaul that Kemp seems to assume they do. I would agree that Naipaul does not provide an alluring picture either of marriage or of casual sex, and does not modulate his despair over the fate of the ex-colonial societies. I'd agree, too, that his work reflects a great deal of personal distress. I am surprised that Kemp did not also point out that Naipaul lacks a sense of humour.

It seems to me that most of what Kemp observes about Naipaul's work could be recast as part of the description of a great writer with a tragic sense of the human condition and of contemporary history. Swift and Gombrowicz and Céline were not paragons of psychological normality, did not present balanced views, and were not encouraging about the personal or the political future, either.

Perhaps Kemp takes Naipaul to be some kind of journalist, because he writes about his travels and because his fiction draws on experiences recounted in his non-fiction. But even a journalist shouldn't be chastised for not providing us with positive heroes – much less for not being one himself.

And, yes, Naipaul does repeat himself from book to book. This is standard practice for a writer with a real voice; that is, a real writer – who writes out of obsessions, out of a temperament. It is true that Naipaul "keeps uncovering the same pattern" when he travels. He doesn't, doubtless, understand everything that passes before him. He understands only a few things, profoundly.

"Despite the formidable literary powers that have accompanied his impressive peregrinations" and "the surface diversity he can so brilliantly depict", here is Kemp, in the final paragraph of his formidable dismissal of Naipaul, bidding to make marginal what is, and must be, central: the writing. We've already had some ritual saluting of the merely literary ("passages of elegiac, lapidary prose"), so we can feel at ease with the philistine payoff: "a morbidly solipsistic work". Well, maybe. Judged by the standards of Psychology 101. But a profound, and profoundly upsetting book, judged as literature. For in this assessment of *The Enigma of Arrival*, literature is what gets left out: the standards appropriate for judging literature, at the level at which Naipaul performs. His views, obsessions and his distress are those of a magnificent, important writer – one of the handful of that breed alive today.

SUSAN SONTAG.  
Farrar Straus and Giroux, 19 Union Square West, New York, New York 10003.

### 'Anti-Calvinists'

Sir, – While I would concur that its publication adds an important contribution to debate, I cannot share Conrad Russell's unbounded enthusiasm (Letters, August 21) for Nicholas

### FIFTY YEARS ON

The TLS of August 28, 1937, carried a review of Richard Terrell's Soviet Understanding, from which these extracts are taken:

"Mr Terrell begins by drawing a distinction, which he makes fundamental, between Soviet man and Western-European man."

"For the Soviet citizen thought and action are naively mixed into a single psycho-physical way of living. For the Westerner thought and action are separated, the latter constituting the humdrum way of life, the former a 'dubious' and unintelligible indulgence called philosophy."

"[He attacks] a philosophic humanism as a false conception, which 'envisages a false, comfortable, cultivated, well-meaning, bourgeois sort of civilization, ruddy of feature and genial in outlook, in which intellectuals

wear large black bow ties and peasant girls yodel songs."

Russia is not a bit like that. To begin with, the theory of the Soviet State is Marxian, which means that evil is not regarded as an affliction sent from Heaven which man must endure, but as a challenge to the resources of science and the ingenuity of men's minds. Secondly, it is not actually of the Soviet State is Russian. It is no abstract proletariat that lines up to pass before Lenin's tomb, but "Russian men and women in cotton shirts with embroidered edges." They have their Russian background, too, of oppression and brutalization, which has expressed itself now in an oppressive and brutal assertion of long-denied rights. The Russian revolution came because the people could no longer endure the increasingly harsh conditions of their lives.

As for Charles's reiteration of the Thirty-Nine Articles, I find Russell's position puzzling, since I cannot detect the sinister intent he finds in Charles's declaration that the articles "contain the true doctrine of the Church of England" and should not be drawn "aside any way" but taken "in the literal and grammatical sense". Since James I himself had in 1622 forbidden preaching "the deep points of predestination, election and reprobation", Charles (whatever his different attitude to ceremonial uniformity) appears in this to have left the goalposts where they were – indeed to have endeavoured to ensure that the game was played peacefully and by the rules.

KEVIN SHARPE.  
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### The Status of Psychoanalysis

Sir, – John D. Sutherland (Letters, August 14), commenting on Peter Lomas's review of Winnicott's letters, manages to confuse a number of issues and thereby miss the point. First, it may be true that theories or ideas about child development can be derived from psychoanalytic therapy and these ideas in turn can, sometimes, be made subject to scientific investigation and testing; and it may further be true that these newly tested ideas can be fed back into therapeutic practice. These facts, however, make no difference to the question of the scientific status of psychoanalytic practice itself. The fact that dreams, poetry, conversations or therapeutic encounters may either produce or embody ideas subsequently capable of translation into scientific generalization or theories does not thereby make the poetry, dreams etc more scientific. This confusion of issues leads Sutherland to misunderstand Lomas's point about the importance of the person of the therapist in the practice of analytic psychotherapy; an importance which it is difficult adequately to understand or theorize about while the practice of therapy is confused with the theories which (partially) inform it and sometimes derive from it.

Second, Sutherland calls on John Bowlby's work in support of his thesis. A recent interview with Bowlby (*Free Associations*, 6) strongly suggests that he did not see his

theories of development as supportive of psychoanalytic orthodoxy (nor supported by it), and that he did make a clear distinction between therapeutic practice and scientific research. While Bowlby's and Winnicott's ideas have many similarities, they are based on quite different premisses and principles.

ROGER RACON.  
Cambridge Psychotherapy Practice, 26 Newnham Road, Cambridge.

### 'Going by the Book'

Sir, – Lynn Struve's account (August 14) of the frustrations suffered in the National Beijing Library may evoke sympathy. But lest the account be accepted as being invariably typical of the experiences of foreign sinologists who seek facilities for research in China, may I record that I found little difficulty in that same library last year. I asked to examine copies of some rare editions of the *Po-hui t'ung*; the microfilms were produced without delay for use in machinery that was more up to date than that which can always be found in some of the learned libraries of the United Kingdom.

MICHAEL LOEWE.  
Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Cambridge, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge.

### H. L. Mencken

Sir, – Richard King's review of two books of H. L. Mencken's letters (July 17) contains a common misapprehension about the great Mencken: "Yet by the 1930s he had become a cranky reactionary, inveighing against Franklin D. Roosevelt and all his works" (my emph-

asis). Mencken in fact "became" nothing of the kind. As he described his own intellectual development, "On all known subjects, ranging from aviation to xylophone-playing, I have fixed and invariable ideas. They have not changed since I was four or five years old."

The views that caused him to oppose violations of free speech and favours to business, such as the tariff, in the 1920s were the same as those that caused him to oppose the encroachments of the New Deal bureaucracy in the 1930s. Motivating him in both decades was a principled commitment to individual liberty. As he put it, "I believe in only one thing and that thing is human liberty . . . I am against any man and any organization which seeks to limit or deny that freedom."

SHELDON L. RICHMAN.  
Institute for Humane Studies, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax, Virginia 22031.

### Classical and Romantic Music

Sir, – Barry Millington, in his letter of August 21 replying to my review of Arnold Whittall's *Romantic Music* and Julian Rushton's *Classical Music* (August 7), mistakes me. I am not suggesting that musicology should limit itself to the "academic and technical". What concerns me is that so much music history written for the "general reader" is intellectually unadventurous, dull, unimaginative in its discourse and relentlessly chronological.

ROBERT CHRISTIANSEN.  
4 Downs Park Road, London E8.

### AMONG THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

Anna Adams's most recent collections of poems are *Dear Vincent* and *Trees in Sheep Country*, both published in 1986.  
Kathleen Adler is the author (with Tamur Garb) of *Berthe Morisot*, which appeared earlier this year. Her *Mancu* will be published in October.  
G. P. Butler is Professor of German at the University of Bath.  
John Butt is a lecturer in Spanish at King's College, London. His books include *Writers and Politics in Modern Spain*, 1979.  
Lesley Chamberlain's *Food and Cooking of Russia* was published in 1982.  
David Coward is a lecturer in French at the University of Leeds, and the author of *The Dreyfus Affair*, 1983. His translation of *La Dame aux camélias* will be published in the World's Classics series shortly.  
Elizabeth Cowling is a lecturer in the History of Art at the University of Edinburgh.  
Dick Davis is Northern Arts Literary Fellow at the Universities of Newcastle and Durham. He has translated several works by Natalia Ginzburg, including her most recent novel, *The City and the House*, 1986.  
D. J. Enright's *The Alluring Problem: An essay on irony* was published last year.  
Jean Floud was Principal of Newnham College, Cambridge, from 1972 to 1983. She is the author (with Warren Young) of *Dangerousness and Criminal Justice*, 1981.  
Peter France is Professor of French at the University of Edinburgh. His edition of Rousseau's *Confessions* was published earlier this year.  
P. N. Furbank is Visiting Professor in Literature at the Open University, and the author of *Italo Svevo: The man and the writer*, 1966. His latest book is *Unholy Pleasure: The idea of social class*, 1985.  
John Gardner is a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.  
Victoria Glandfield's biography *Rebecca West* appeared earlier this year.  
Tom Hadden is Professor of Emergency Law at Queen's University, Belfast, and is the author of *Ireland: A positive proposal*, 1985.  
Roy Harris is Professor of General Linguistics at the University of Oxford. His books include *The Origin of Writing*, 1986, and a translation of Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale*, for which he was awarded the Scott Moncrieff Prize.  
Barbara Held is the author of *Terrible Perfection: Women and Russian literature*, which will be published in the autumn. She is Professor of Russian Literature at the University of British Columbia.  
E. W. Ives's books include *The Common Lawyers of Pre-Reformation England*, *Thomas Keble: A case study*, 1983.  
D. A. N. Jones was Assistant Editor of the *Listener* from 1973 to 83. His novels include *Parade in Paris*, 1968.  
Jonathan Keates's books include *Handel: The man and his music*, 1985. His novel, *The Strangers' Gallery*, is reviewed on page 929.  
Brian Lee is Professor of American Studies at the University of Nottingham. His *American Fiction: 1865-1940* will be published next month.  
Anna Laura Lepczyk is a lecturer in Italian at University College London, and the author (with Giulio Lepczyk) of *The Italian Language Today*, 1977.  
John Lewis's books include *Typography: Basic Principles: Influences and trends since the 19th century*, 1964.  
Wm. Roger Louis is Kerr Professor at the University of Texas, Austin, and a Fellow of St Antony's College, Oxford. His *The Last Three Viceroy's* will be published in the autumn.  
Norbert Lynton is Professor of History of Art and Dean of the School of European Studies at the University of Sussex. He is working on an interpretative account of Russian Modernism, to be published next year.  
Jill Neville's most recent novel is *Last Ferry to Manly*, 1985.  
David Piper's most recent book is *The Image of the Poet: British poets and their portraits*, 1983.  
Stephen Plince is co-translator of Ernst Bloch's *The Principle of Hope*, 1986.  
Ray Porter is a lecturer at the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, London. His most recent book is *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 1982.  
Jane Roberts is Curator of the Print Room at the Royal Library, Windsor Castle.  
Richard Shannon is the author of *Gladsstone and the Outgoing Age*, 1870, 1975: Volume One of his *Biography of Gladstone* was published in 1982.  
A. W. B. Simpson's *Legal Theory and Legal History: Essays on the common law has just been published*.  
John Stevens is the author of *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court*, 1961. His most recent publication is *Words and Music in the Middle Ages*, 1986.  
Randall Stevenson is a lecturer in English Literature at the University of Edinburgh, and author of *The British Novel Since the Thirties*, 1986.  
Julian Symonds's books include *The Hungry Thirties*, 1976. His *Bloody Murder: From the detective story to the crime novel: A history*, 1972, winner of the Edgar Allan Poe Award, was reissued in paperback last year.  
E. S. Turner's books include *Dear Old Blipshy*, 1980, and *An ABC of Nostalgia*, 1984.  
J. J. White is Reader in German at King's College, London, and the co-editor of *Moral in Focus*, 1980.  
Adrian Woolridge is a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.







# Questions about genre

John Stevens

CHRISTOPHER PAGE  
Voices and Instruments of the Middle Ages:  
Instrumental practice and songs in France  
1100-1300  
316pp. Dent. £20.  
0-7040146071

No musical sign-system can be perfect and complete; it is often no more explicit than non-phonetic spelling can be about the sounds of the words it represents. The understanding of twentieth-century music should not be too difficult in five hundred years' time because of the abundance of recordings which document the wishes of composers and interpretations of performers. The fascination of the songs of the early Middle Ages is that we shall never know precisely how they sounded and yet there is enough basic musical material, a sufficiency of "signs", to make us feel that some of the lacunae can be filled if only we work imaginatively at them.

The fashion of the past few decades has been all for clothing the skeletons in fancy dress - tinkling cymbals and twangling instruments sustaining, decorating or obscuring the voice. For the professional musician the idea that most medieval monophonic songs were accompanied by instruments is a particularly seductive one - seductive for sound commercial reasons. Concert, or television, audiences prefer something exciting to watch and to hear; they like a gaudy noise. And since "those who live to please must please to live", this is what audiences in the 1960s and 70s have been given.

Our present-day troubadours cannot, however, be blamed for parading with a colourful troupe of jongleurs, since in the scholarly world the question has gone by default. Christopher Page's *Voices and Instruments of the Middle Ages* is the first substantial study devoted specifically to the question - were the

songs of the troubadours and trouvères accompanied by instruments? Up to this time scholarly utterances have generally proceeded from the assumption that of course the songs were accompanied. The most astonishing example of this is the seventy-six-page exposition by Thomas Binkley which a few years ago had pride of place in the first issue of an authoritative new journal, the *Basler Jahrbuch für historische Musikpraxis*; he states that he has long been convinced that the "optimal" performance of the monophonic songs of the Middle Ages "demands instrumental accompaniment". He cannot himself go into the reasons, he says, which speak for this belief - though he would wish that someone would do so sometime. He wants simply to deal with his own procedures of reconstruction and with the styles which for him are bound up with accompaniment. Binkley's wish has been granted, but the answer to his question is not quite what he assumed.

Christopher Page has taken as his point of departure a useful clarification by Hendrik van der Werf: the issue is not whether medieval singers ever sang to instrumental accompaniment but which songs were so sung, and when. In a refreshingly brisk and concise way Page has constructed a hypothesis based upon "the few sources which refer to different kinds of songs in contexts where it is clear what kinds of song are meant, and where instrumental accompaniment is mentioned in explicit terms". Put in this bald way the task might not seem particularly difficult, provided you have the time, energy and determination to search diligently through the necessary texts (over 110 romances and epics in Old French alone form the basis of the analyses in Appendix 2). But the proper interpretation of these texts is no simple matter; it involves both philological expertise and literary-critical sophistication to a high degree. Page has these qualifications and adds a close familiarity with the history and terminology of medieval instruments.

At the end of a preliminary chapter in which



The viella, or five-stringed fiddle; an illustration from a French thirteenth-century manuscript, now in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. It is reproduced from the book reviewed here.

singing, string-playing and composing are established as courtly arts contributory to the whole mun, the knight (or squire) who is *bels e gens e covien parlers* (an eloquent speaker) and much loved, especially by high-born ladies, the author quotes a passage from one of his favourite texts, the *Guillaume de Dole* of Jean Renart (c1220), in which a *vallet* sings a "good song" by the Vidame de Chartres, "Quant le secons del douz tens s'asseur". It is a quiet domestic scene; a jongleur is present but apparently takes no part. "Despite the evidence that string-playing was endowed with a powerful courtly ethos, there is a performance at court where instrumental accompaniment is available but not used." Is this because it was a matter of indifference whether instruments took part or not? Or is there a principle at stake? Page suggests - and it is the central tenet of his study - that "questions of instrumental usage in troubadour and trouvère song are essentially questions about genre - about the differences between different kinds of song".

The most important kind of song was the *grand chant courtois*, "the 'classic' form" of troubadour and trouvère art. The dominance of the *grand chant* in the hierarchy of secular music is beyond dispute, and yet in modern histories, anthologies and concert programmes it is generally obscured. The High Style song, as Page terms it, is by definition a complex, exclusive artefact; it is not easy to understand and not easy to "put over" convincingly, without vulgarization, to a modern audience. It is "neither gregarious in impulse nor indulgent towards its listeners"; it remains decorous and aloof. With the High Style song is contrasted the Low Style (the terms, borrowed from the art of rhetoric, are relevant, since the *grand chant* is, aesthetically considered, a type of superior "eloquence", a form of oration). Low Style song is typified by dance-song, known generically in this period as the *carole* - lively, accessible, choric. Page goes on to argue the likelihood that fiddle-accompaniment was associated with Low Style songs and with songs like the *desort* which deliberately subverted the decorum of the *grand chant*. He is never unduly dogmatic - it is one of the most persuasive features of his work - but one ends up by being convinced that the troubadour *canso* and trouvère *chanson* represented a peak of melodic art which was thought to be best conveyed in all subtlety by the human voice alone. By way of a postscript to this argument he puts forward the fascinating hypothesis that

we may be confronting a fundamental characteristic of twelfth- and thirteenth-century string-playing here: instrumental music does not seem to have been associated with the kind of profound creative endeavour which demanded serious and considered attention from the listener.

Successive chapters consider the scene in

twelfth-century Provence and in thirteenth-century Northern France and the final codifications of the great art of melody in the early fourteenth century, especially in the treatise *Leys d'Amors* representing the activities of the *sobregaya* companies of the *Trobadors de Tolosa*, a neglected work whose significance Page has examined in detail. (One of the beautiful illustrations in the book reproduces significant marginalia from the A-text not available in the standard edition of 1840.)

It is only when we are led to consider the state of affairs in Paris around 1300 that the picture becomes more complicated. At this period "musical instruments came increasingly to impinge on the lives of clerics"; this is deduced, perhaps rather boldly, from the addition of tuning directions for *rubebe* and *viella* at the end of the three-part treatise by Jerome of Moravia designed to teach his fellow-Dominicans and others how to sing ecclesiastical chant. The period at which Johannes de Grocheo certainly, and Jerome of Moravia probably, were in Paris is one when a new style of music was beginning to be popular; its "classical" form was the French motet. This was also time at which rational analysis and Aristotelian terminology were applied to the *scientia* and more surprisingly, the *usus* of musical instruments. Page argues that it was a result, partly of this new intellectual respectability of the musical instruments became popular among the clerics. The actual evidence may seem slender, and the stated contrast with the "rural silence in the monastery, broken only by the sound of the liturgy" not wholly convincing. But the suggestion that there may have been a real change in instrumental habit if one may call them that, at this time seems a most fruitful one. If, as seems likely, grounds that are outside the scope of Page's book, there was a new fashion for melodic melody (the motet is full of refrains in dance-song) which affected the notation and performance of some late trouvère changes may there not at the same time have been a new way and a new freedom in the use of instruments to accompany them? One of the new ways may have been the creation of a second "voice" mainly in parallel fifths with melody; but the principal novelty could have been having an accompaniment at all in *grand chant*. A principal witness in all this is Johannes de Grocheo - the informative but baffling theorist who writes of the Parisian musical scene he knew. Page has many more while things to say of him.

Chapters on the *carole*, on the Latin *romance* and its links with the secular *canz*, and the *lai* conclude Part One. The last of these contains a most interesting critical account of views and a convincing critique of the *locus classicus* of *lai*-performance. This passage from the Anglo-Norman *Roman de Horn* has all too often been taken at its face-value as a piece of realistic description; Page sees it as "activating a complex narrative motif with a number of constant elements."

Part One, which contains these general arguments and hypotheses, brings us, in fact, less than halfway through the book. Part Two proper is quite short but immensely detailed in its exploration of "certain technical characteristics of instruments which bear directly upon the character of the accompaniments that would be able to provide". The *viella* is beyond doubt the queen of instruments at this time. Performers will note, perhaps with some doubt that wind-instruments have no role to play. Finally we come to four appendices, occupying a hundred pages and more: they cover instrumental terminology; a selective typology of musical references; literary references to stringed instruments; and information about string-materials. They display in extent, and with many further stimulating comments, materials on which the conclusions of this excellent study - fresh, original, and founded as so firmly based.

In *English Renaissance Song* (185pp. Basingstoke, Hants. £19.95. 0 8057 6915 3), Peter Doughtie delves into the golden age of English song and poetry. From the pioneering *lute* of Gascoigne, Doughtie proceeds to the "drab" style of Thomas Whythorne (c1500-1596) and the "golden" one of Campion. Numerous close studies of words and music

# The company of outsiders

Anna Laura Lepschy

JONATHAN KEATES  
The Strangers' Gallery  
217pp. Hamish Hamilton. £10.95.  
0 241 12335 6

Stendhal's Parma and Heinrich Mann's Modena in *Die kleine Stadt* are two nineteenth-century northern Italian precedents for Jonathan Keates's Villafranca. Under this name (which he has already used in "The Distinguished Elephant", one of the short stories in his collection *Allegro Postillions*, 1983), Keates sets Modena at the centre of his novel. Elements of the city's distant history (like the stolen bucket of Tassonian fame) and of its

## Harsh histories

Jo-Ann Goodwin

TORIL BREKKE  
The Jacaranda Flower and eleven other stories  
from Africa  
Translated by Anne Born  
143pp. Methuen. £9.95 (paperback, £3.50).  
0 413 4870 X  
MARJORIE OLUDHE MACGOYE  
The Present Moment  
153pp. Heinemann. £10.95.  
0 434 4027 2

In 1985 Toril Brekke accepted an invitation to visit Kenya and undertook to write about Kenyan village women. The United Nations Women's Conference was to be held in Nairobi in July of the same year; women writers from ten countries were to travel to ten other countries to write on "various aspects of women's life". Travelling over large parts of the country - west to Kisumu by Lake Victoria, east to Mombasa on the shores of the Indian Ocean - Brekke encountered during this odyssey several of the tribes who together make up the disparate social and cultural groups of the Kenyan nation. She arrived in East Africa with a mission, to establish an "understanding" with Kenyan women. There are, however, aspects of Kenyan life which no amount of well-intentioned liberalism can gloss over - the hiss of *matungu* (white man) on the streets, echoing to long years of resentment; the barrier between the white visitor and the indigenous African, which is not merely one of colour, but involves a racism distorted by colonial rule. Although the dress-swords and plumed hats have long since departed, every aspect of society remains indelibly marked by the Empire, and no relationship is possible between African and European without the old corruption intervening.

It is greatly to Toril Brekke's credit that she avoids the temptation to sentimentalize the impoverished and, to our eyes, often brutal and humiliating lives she describes in the series of short stories which make up *The Jacaranda Flower*. The concerns she addresses are those

more recent past (like the 1831 uprising with Ciro Menotti) are woven into the narrative, whose public events culminate in an abortive coup against Duke Carlo Francesco IV after a gala night at the opera. But the historical and political city is subordinated to its physical and psychological aspects, and to help in defining its character Keates introduces outside judgments. Cristina Bentivoglio arrives from Milan to stay with her Rangoni cousins (through Milanese eyes this Emilian region appears foreign); her enigmatic temperament and mysterious parentage provide one of the threads of the story. The other outsiders are more alien than Cristina. Count Castelvetro's Jewish steward, Daniele Basevi, although a native of the region, views his employers' world with the perception of one who will never belong. There is immediate understand-

ing between him and the protagonist of the novel Edward Rivers, the outsider *par excellence* who is visiting his aunt, the Countess Castelvetro, the neglected English wife whom the count married after a previous, tragically ended, secret love. Always an outsider by reason of her nationality and her religion, she is quizzed by her nephew about the England he has hardly known.

Edward has spent only the first seven of his nineteen years in England; since then he has lived on the Continent with his hypochondriac father and indifferent mother. With his perfect command of languages and impeccable manners he has always succeeded in fitting in without feeling at home anywhere. *The Strangers' Gallery* opens with his arrival in Villafranca, resigned to months of boredom. He is shaken out of his passivity by his meeting with Cristina, who, he is to discover the moment he can no longer hide his infatuation for her, is engaged to be married to a local count, Guido Tagliabosco. Edward is not left with "the colossal uselessness of his passion" for long. There develops a complicated, shifting, triangular relationship, with the strongest feelings being Guido's for his rival. Edward, at first gratified by the couple's need for him, gradually detaches himself, as his true affection is directed towards Cristina's cousin Maricla. But before committing himself to her, he decides he must leave Italy for England for a couple of years, exchanging, one suspects, one

The novel's difficulty is that it has too much to say. It is an indication of the quality of Macgoye's writing that these terrible histories never lose their ability to shock, and yet the text is overcrowded. As it progresses, the reader becomes increasingly confused - who exactly is Walpole? did all Bessie's children die, or just one? The problem is one of structure; the interweaving of the women's stories lacks clarity, and some emotional effect is necessarily lost if, when we learn of Florence's death, we are frantically searching back to discover whose daughter she was in the first place. The novel's greatest strength is in its use of language; Macgoye has created an idiom representative of the country, alien and yet intimate, to describe an existence which is both disturbing and fascinating to those of us who live out our lives in the more comfortable, less dazzling West.

## Ambulant abstractions

David Wright

AMOS TUTUOLA  
Papa, Brawler and Slanderer  
150pp. Panther. £9.95 (paperback, £3.95).  
0 511 47143 3

Amos Tutuola's new novel will delight admirers and leave others unconvinced. This reviewer is uncertain whether he is one or the other. Thirty years ago, in the heyday of Dylan Thomas, I enjoyed the eldritch Afro-English of *Tutuola's Palm-Wine Drinkard*. But time moves on and taste alters. What seemed fresh and innocent once, now smacks of the faux-ethnographic. It is the African imagination - fundamental and comprehensible to a European - that lends weight and hidden coherence to what seems a jumble of images and phrases. Tutuola's *Palm-Wine Drinkard* is a masterpiece of this kind. Its chief characters, Papa and Slanderer, having chosen their

destinies before their births (destinies in accordance with their names), travel together from town to town, from one imbroglio to another, till in the final chapter we find we have been reading an allegorical fable, and the three protagonists are revealed as abstractions, symbolic figures there to point a moral.

The scaffolding that supports Tutuola's idiosyncratic and often poetic prose is the Yoruban language, just as Gaelic is the framework behind the otherwise phoney charm of *Erlin-go-bragh* English dialogue in the plays of J. M. Synge. Tutuola's English dialogue has charm too, of a very different kind. One that owes something to its oddly tangled syntax and characteristic counterpointing of images and taste alters. What seemed fresh and innocent once, now smacks of the faux-ethnographic. It is the African imagination - fundamental and comprehensible to a European - that lends weight and hidden coherence to what seems a jumble of images and phrases. Tutuola's *Palm-Wine Drinkard* is a masterpiece of this kind. Its chief characters, Papa and Slanderer, having chosen their

These business dealings are credibly described, as is Walpole's grand wedding, conducted by sixteen clergy, including three bishops, and with groups of women deliberately dressed the same while the men peacock in contrasting colours. Walpole's conscience is stirred. "What value," he asked, did he really

strangers' gallery for another.

The ambivalence which the characters feel towards their estrangement is brilliantly analysed by Keates, who succeeds in conveying both the solitude and the greater awareness which this situation brings ("that stranger's desire to belong" versus "those singular distillations of happiness which derive from the plain fact of being foreign"). accompanied by momentary illusions of identification. One such moment, which has complex undertones, is Edward's act of witness at Basevi's synagogue wedding. After signing his name, "he felt as though, having served an apprenticeship, he had just been presented with his freedom, the freedom simply to be what he was". The secretive Villafrancans find in Edward's alienness an excuse to become more open with each other. This pervasive sense of secrecy is a reflection not only of the character of the city's inhabitants, but of the political mood of the novel. Music, too, is seen as an essential element in social life and at the same time as accompaniment to libertarian political sentiments. There are many touches which add to the richness of this polychromatic novel. One example must suffice here. As secrecy gives way to speech under the influence of the outsider Edward, words in turn become problematic, hiding the inexpressible, and we are offered "the variety of speech as a means of avoiding the responsibility of silence". Jonathan Keates teaches us to heed silence too.

## Profitless partnerships

D. A. N. Jones

TOM HOPKINSON  
Shady City  
382pp. Hutchinson. £11.95.  
0 19 168330 0

There are so many talented Nigerian novelists, remarks Tom Hopkins in an introductory note to his new novel, that "it may appear wilful - even presumptuous - for an English writer to consider Nigeria as setting for an imaginative work". Nevertheless, he has continued to work on the book for the past twenty years, impelled by his travels all over Africa. The hero of *Shady City* (Lagos, naturally) is called Walpole Abiose, a man born in the late 1920s, and the novel ends in the early post-independence years, 1960-2. From my own experience of Nigeria at this time, I found the story generally plausible, but that does not mean that Nigerian readers will.

One of the few good English novelists to write about Nigeria was Joyce Cary, but he has not been admired by the scholars, schoolchildren and general readers of that nation, partly because of his carelessness about names, tribes and religions. Hopkins has certainly tried to do better, making use of Increase Coker's *Grammar of African Names*, but I remain doubtful about how accurate he is over such points of detail; nor is it easy to believe in his fluently written "pidgin" conversations and letters.

Setting such quibbles aside, we may enjoy the story of Walpole, a country boy who runs away to Lagos: he is protected first by a businesslike night-watchman and landlord of poor tenants, then by a powerful business woman, whose lover he becomes. Walpole takes her name, Abiose, becomes her transport manager and accompanies her to church; she pays for his education. Business rivals break up this partnership, tempting Walpole with a pretty girl in Abeokuta, and he moves in with a shady property developer. Rescued from this entanglement by a decently waist-coated, rather Dickensian lawyer, Walpole enters into a fresh partnership, involving contracts dependent on the goodwill of politicians who "must be handled in accordance with their own customs and conventions". This means graft and risk and marrying a big man's daughter.

These business dealings are credibly described, as is Walpole's grand wedding, conducted by sixteen clergy, including three bishops, and with groups of women deliberately dressed the same while the men peacock in contrasting colours. Walpole's conscience is stirred. "What value," he asked, did he really

put on love? Less, evidently, than £20,000." Hopkins is a disciple of Meher Baba, as he has affirmed in his memoir, *Under the Tropic*, and he has attributed to Walpole some of his own spiritual and moral questionings. Walpole is troubled by his neglect of his first protector, the old night-watchman, who is now sick and dying; he feels guilty about his desertion of his true love for the sake of an unloved, unloving wife, in flashy Lagos society. His foreman magically "rolls the bones" to tell him what "the spirits" think of him.

Walpole finds an old friend, leading a decent life in the country, with a simple, sensible wife. The time is now the 1960s, with the Yoruba people of the West feeling repressed and rebellious, and Walpole becomes involved in gun-running, through the accidents of friendship. Eventually he lands in gaol, reflecting on "the folly of pursuing money and power, a pursuit in which failure brings distress but success freezes the heart". The other prisoners ask him to speak in their debate - "Is Life a Rat Race or a Search for God? Just twenty or thirty friends and a little liquor". He is released with a certificate of mental instability, and his fellow-conducts sing a merry song:

Inmate prisoners bin de happiest prisoners.  
Dai cots dey sett'n um free.

Cosy, pious, sometimes devilish sardonic, this tale of modern Africa could almost have been written by a Victorian. Indeed it almost was - Sir Tom was born in 1905.

## Crime file

JOHN SHERWOOD  
Flowers of Evil  
208pp. Gollancz. £9.95.  
0 575 04029 7

Fourth puzzle for botanist and horticulturist Celia Grant, the managing director of Archerscroft Nurseries, who, with her white hair, china-shepherdess complexion and youthful figure, is one of the most attractive amateur detectives around at the moment. Hired by Joan Calliant to turn a neglected garden into a dazzling setting for a garden party, she unwittingly gets involved in the troubles surrounding the Galliant textile firm. Designs are being stolen, the computer's being sabotaged, and Joan's husband Richard is making a habit of turning up drunk or dozed on public occasions. Assisted by Hil Wilkins, her Greek-god-like assistant, Celia efficiently puts the garden to rights and clears up the mystery. This is perhaps the best Celia Grant so far: beautifully engineered, amusingly written, and full of well-researched botanical information.

T. J. Binyon

## LibertyPress LibertyClassics

### WHAT SHOULD ECONOMISTS DO?

By James M. Buchanan  
Preface by H. Geoffrey Brennan and  
Robert D. Tollison

This 1979 Liberty Fund volume brings together sixteen essays by James M. Buchanan on the nature and methods of economists. Several are published here for the first time, including "Professor Alchian on Economic Method", "Natural and Artificial Man", "Notes on the History and Direction of Public Choice", and "Public Choice and Ideology".

Professors Brennan and Tollison state in their preface, "As a founder of the burgeoning subdiscipline of public choice, as a moral and legal philosopher, as a welfare economist who has consistently... defended the primacy of the contractarian ethic, and as a public finance theorist... Buchanan's work has had worldwide recognition..." As a measure of that recognition, Buchanan was awarded the 1986 Nobel Prize in Economics.

Dr. Buchanan is General Director of the Center for the Study of Public Choice and Harris University Professor at George Mason University. Among his other books are *The Limits of Liberty*, and, with Gordon Tullock, *The Calculus of Consent*.

292 pages. Preface, Index.  
Hardcover \$8.00  
Paperback \$3.50

Liberty Fund edition, 1979

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## Compromises, compromises

Jan Dalley

LEONID BORODIN  
Partings  
Translated by David Floyd  
223pp. Collins Harvill. £10.95.  
0002716186

For once, an inaccurate publisher's blurb is cause for celebration. According to the dust jacket of *Partings*, its author is serving a ten-year prison sentence: in fact he was released, suddenly, at the end of June. Borodin had already spent the years from 1967 to 1973 in "strict régime" camps for his political and religious beliefs. Such an uncompromising personal history makes it more surprising, perhaps, that *Partings* should be a subtle study of compromise, mapping the area between conformity and dissent inhabited by most thinking people in the Soviet Union.

An individual compromise with the State has been constructed by each of the book's many characters. They are, in the main, Moscow intellectuals, people whose rooms boast a photo of Solzhenitsyn, an icon and a copy of *The Master and Margarita* (but who only go in for "a little irony perhaps, a little free-thinking, and thank God we have real dissidents, whom the police can easily distinguish..."); the novel is a tour through their edifices of belief and self-deception. Its hero and narrator, Gennadi, is weary, anxious, hamstrung by self-doubt: the classic superfluous man of nineteenth-century literature, in Soviet mode. His father is a Marxist-Leninist who ends every argument with an invincible shrug of the shoulder; and his mother and sister have been drawn into the dissident movement by the latter's lover (who betrays her). Both positions, like those of all his acquaintances, seem unsatisfactory.

Oleg-like, Gennadi fancies himself in love with a young country girl, Tanya, a priest's daughter from Siberia. In her letters to Gennadi - full of hay-making and whitewashing the church - Borodin tries to state his Christian convictions straightforwardly, and his lightness of touch fails him ("down here, wherever you go you can see our church, so you needn't ever

get lost"), but elsewhere he manages to convey his fierce belief - that intellectualism erodes faith, and with it the capacity to act decisively - in more playful terms: "Are you wearing a cross?" he asked. I had to smile. What intellectual could possibly be without a cross? It was a naive question... like asking if I had read *Ishmael* or *Kafka*."

Gennadi hopes to make a quick rouble by ghosting the memoirs of a war-hero, a pathetic figure with one arm, a chestful of medals and a tiny pension: apostle of another faith. Like much else, the plan was concocted by Zhenka Polukhov, high priest of opportunism, an arch-fixer who maintains "a businesslike relationship" with the system: "the Soviet Union... is the ideal country for a person of initiative and intellect. [It] is so appreciative of ideological support that it's willing to overlook economic pranks played by those who fundamentally conform."

Rich strands of literary and traditional association lend the book its strong emotional impact. The plausible, amoral Zhenka has Dostoevskian forebears; Tanya, besides being Tatyana to Gennadi's Olegin, is an element (scarcely a character) from Russian fairy-tale, her Siberian background a lost dream of pastoral as well as the nightmare setting of the gulags. But for us *Partings* is more powerful as an incisive Russian novel of the present. Borodin's experience allows him speculations that would be impertinent in other people - such as, for example, whether going to prison for one's beliefs might not be a supreme form of egoism. He avoids preaching, on the whole, and he can be bitterly funny: Gennadi arrives at his own wedding party (he marries the worldly Irina, of course, not Tanya) in a "foul mood", having just delivered a parcel for his sister in prison, but later he whispers to Irina: "Shall we join the dissidents, then, when we've had the baby?"

To say that writing this book was brave would be an understatement: it was almost suicidal. It stands as a sort of message to its own characters, an exemplary act within the debate that forms its subject. As a novel, however, it needs no special pleading, and it tells us what we really want to know - how people more or less like ourselves actually live and think in "the place where Russia used to be".

## A choice of destiny

Barbara Heldt

NINA BERBEROVA  
The Accompanist  
Translated by Marian Schwartz  
94pp. Collins. £7.95.  
0002231603

Nina Berberova, who was born in 1901, has written poetry, novels, novellas, memoirs and biographies. She started young among the writers of Petersburg/Petrograd and has finished old among Slavists in America, having lived in France for much of her life. Her novella about one woman, an accompanist, who has nothing, and another, a singer who has everything, was first written in Russian in 1936, then anthologized with five other stories in 1949, and has recently been translated into English, French and Italian. Despite an efficient translation, it does not stand up well as a single short novel, burdened as it is with various old-fashioned conventions, yet without the psychological interest that usually comes with them. It begins with the convention of found notes and ends with the one about the loaded gun (which goes off in the last part of the book, when the Chekhovian point is made that nothing changes thereby in either heroine). The glamorous singer who has refused to leave her husband is freed to go off to America with her lover; she still has everything. The narrator-accompanist is not freed from her eternal envy; furthermore, she is out of a job.

*The Accompanist* is built on the opposition between a beautiful and a non-beautiful woman; it lacks any real description of either. Here, the narrator (unbeautiful), who is hired during the Russian civil war years and later in emigration to live in luxury as the accompanist of the singer (beautiful), says, well into the story, "Yes, I was young. There wasn't much

more to say about me." Of the singer it is said: "She was very quiet. She was often very quiet." Berberova fails to make these absences palpable. The singer thinks about her lover while the narrator is obsessed with what the singer gets away with. Yet the interaction between the two, the chemistry of female dependencies, could have been made much more interesting, as we know from reading Jean Genet or Jean Rhys. The male secondary characters here are stereotypes: the crude, but kind, ruthless businessman husband, the absent-minded genius composer, and the tall mysterious stranger. At times Berberova uses italics to indicate thoughts of betrayal or assertiveness, on the part of the heroine. As with her book of memoirs, *The Ladies Are Mine* (written in 1960-5, the Russian text recently revised), authorial vehemence is there but where other people are concerned, this intensity often occurs with surprising suddenness.

Berberova has often stated her disbelief in people's innocence and a feeling that Russian emigrés bring about their own fate, especially if they choose to return to the Soviet Union; this slight novel is another statement of the theme of ultimate responsibility for one's own destiny. Nevertheless, some survivors may wish to protest that other people's "fates" are not necessarily a result of their psychology or poor political decisions.

The latest issue of *2PLUS2*, the sixth, opens with a translation from the Russian of a story by Zinoviy Zinik, "Oedipus Stalks", and a translation from the Czech by Ewald Osers of a long story by Rudislav Neudal. *2PLUS2*, styling itself a journal of "international writing", also contains work translated from Italian, Bulgarian, Gaelic, as well as original work in English and French. The volume costs £2.75, from Melburn Press S.A., 1000 Louvain 25, Switzerland.

## Cabaret-time

Lesley Chamberlain

IVAN KLIMA  
A Summer Affair  
Translated by Ewald Osers  
263pp. Chatto and Windus. £11.95.  
0701131403

David Krempa is a dull married scientist whose life is confined to his research until he meets Iva, who brings him perfect pain. Shamelessly and unreasonably, not enjoying the hurt, he abandons his family and his work for a humiliating and temperamental sexual arrangement. For most of this simply written novel neither the reader nor David nor Iva knows whether their affair involves love, only that it causes David to lose faith in his work on human longevity. The crazy girl with a scar on her wrist who abuses him makes him wonder what he lived for until he involved himself in her beautiful, lustful, childlike doubt. There is a life-like tale, which after many pages of gently gripping narrative reaches a daunting conclusion.

The mechanics of adultery consist in David's endless calculations (transferred now from mice to men), desperate lies, petty acts of meanness and the indefatigable excuse of work; anything goes, so long as it protects time and opportunity. All that is left of marriage-with-children is the nuts and bolts of a dismantled contraption which the guilty engineer moves from convenient place to place; the spirit it has flown as surely as if it had been removed to another dimension. In the conjugal bed David is most alive to the telephone.

He thinks in stereotypes. His girl is sexy, young, boundlessly attractive to other men, while his wife is tired and fat and his children more irritating than vulnerable. Yet it is not thinking that makes him act. It is as if the moral life were a matter of two orbits coinciding. Now that he circles a different sun, his wife's suffering is merely tangential. He drove slowly on the old planet, now he is reckless; he used to save, but now he has become extravagant. The new life is diffuse and unpredictable, whereas the defects of the old are precise and nameable. At this point David tries to pick up the intellectual thread linking his will to his work and finds that that dream of infinity was pitifully small.

David's spiritual removal allows for some superbly laconic destructive characterization, as when he muses on his wife: "There was



Daghani's gouache and Chinese ink depiction of the head of an inmate of the Mikhailovka labour and extermination camp in the Ukraine. The Jewish Romanian artist was interned there during 1942 and 1943. Monica Bohm-Duchon's monograph on the painter, Arnold Daghani (120pp, with 118 black-and-white and 10 colour illustrations. £9.95. £7.95/£7.00 8), from which this is reproduced, is published by Diprych, 11 Bettridge Road, London SW6 3QH.

nothing exceptional in her appearance and no militancy in her mental make-up. The world of the arts had, happily, never touched her at all. His monitoring of his own feelings is kinder, but exact about his muddle. "I've never driven anywhere without knowing where I was going. But now I'm driving just for the drive." Though Ivan Klima does not quite condone these facts, not matters inviting judgment. Love is a condition, not a controllable sin, and Klima writes about it with disconcerting Flaubertian wisdom.

There's little to caviar in Ewald Osers's fluent translation from the Czech, except perhaps that word "arts". Iva is a cabaret artist, married to a musician; she's there because she has been caught up by male fantasy to be enjoyed *à la Saul Bowles*; to appeal to David, his wife surely needed instruction in show business.

## Lonely campaigner

Jane Lucraft

MONIKA MARON  
Flight of Ashes  
Translated by David Newton Marinelli  
188pp. Readers International. £8.95  
(paperback, £4.95).  
0930523229

Despite the anxiously topical blurb linking it to Chernobyl, *Flight of Ashes* mainly concerns the captive mind. A successful East German woman journalist visits B, a filthy industrial town, and is tormented by what she cannot write. Refusing to compromise, she is offended by her colleagues' evasiveness and complacency; she considers the cost of self-censorship as a way of life, sinks into depression, has a passionate affair with an old friend, neglects her child and resorts to sleeping pills. Her expulsion from the Party looks set when for unknown reasons the Supreme Council decides to shut the reactor at B. That hardly signals an individual moral victory against the totalitarian strategies of the State, however, and the only triumph for Josefa Nudler comes from letting go the lover she had been using for shelter against herself.

Monika Maron explores dissent as a female predicament, though Josefa's femininity is only one way in which she feels her plight. She studies the women around her, holding high office as well as enjoying the best returns from being pretty. Removing herself in disgust from the fat bottom of a morally sluggish society, she finds temporary asylum in sexual ecstasy, but to the end her strength is a futile

being comes from being alone.

Regardless of gender, the self divided by totalitarian conformity is in greater pain for knowing that some of its weakness is self-inflicted. Josefa suffers socially from condemning herself to be the unloved outsider. Deprived of social status she fears that the individual wholeness she covets is disintegrating. The desire to compensate so invades her personal life that she risks losing her balance. The conformists see her classically as suffering from delusions of grandeur, and her lover no longer finds this mental wreck attractive. Who is she to think she can change the fate of a town by talking to workers she romanticizes because their lives are so far from hers? It is the familiar struggle of the spirited life against a long-since levelled, uncritical establishment: because of the vast loneliness of the campaign the fighter risks real madness along the way.

Josefa lives with most modern cons and only some small shopping queues in a curiously uncharacterized neo-Prussian world shaded with only mental colour. If there is no heroic feminist or anti-Communist line to this slow-moving novel of ideas and painful dreams, it is because Josefa's struggle touches on the dark side of all non-conformity. Her lament may strike chords with those who fear the Creative and Media as much as the Party line:

"I wanted to work in a publishing house after a graduate," she said, "as a proofreader. I might even have written something myself. I wanted to publish books, not to keep them from being published. I don't want to have a profession where you end up doing the opposite thing overnight. In that case I'd rather be a baker or a doctor, for Christ's sake, anything but something that has to do with the media."

## Suffering and rebellion

Nick Davis

NATALIA GINZBURG  
The Manzoni Family  
Translated by Marie Evans  
250pp. Manchester: Carcanet. £12.95.  
093056444

In *The Manzoni Family* Natalia Ginzburg has made her usual role as a creator of fiction to write a group biography of the greatest nineteenth-century Italian novelist, and of his family. But anyone who knows the author's own novels will recognize here all her pre-occupations and techniques: the biography is recounted through letters (as are two of her novels), its subject is a family's growth and decay (this is her abiding obsession, as all her works indicate), and the preponderance of women in the Manzoni circle (a formidable author, two wives and six daughters) allows her to give free rein to her ability to enter into

the psychology of feminine subversion and rebellion. Even the appallingly high mortality rate in large nineteenth-century families seems continuous with Ginzburg's own fictional world, in which sudden death occurs with chilling frequency. And at the book's centre is the rather elusive Manzoni himself, a figure certain to fascinate any Italian novelist, who must perforce grow up in his shadow.

*The Manzoni Family* (reviewed in the Italian original in the *TLS*, June 24, 1983) is, I believe, Ginzburg's masterpiece. The skill with which she evokes the reality of family life by the building up of apparently trivial domestic detail, her compassion for the mute suffering that so much of this life entails, her sheer human concern for the multitude of characters she so vividly describes, have never been put to better or more poignant use.

The translation, by Marie Evans, is in the main fluent and persuasive, though it shows occasional signs of haste, as does the rather sloppy proof-reading.

## Against institutions

Stephen Plaice

THOMAS BERNHARD  
Wagenstet's Nephew: A Friendship  
Translated by Ewald Osers  
170pp. Quartet. £8.95.  
093026116

As English reader coming to Thomas Bernhard's autobiographical writings for the first time through this translation might well find the tone scurrilous, the content exaggerated, the perspective haughty. To understand the relentless invective against the whole sweep of Austria's institutions, the reader should first be acquainted with the history of Bernhard's incarceration in his country's schools, clinics and terminal wards, recorded in his five volumes (to date) of autobiography. *Wagenstet's Nephew* is as much a coda to these volumes as it is a tribute to Bernhard's late friend Paul Wittgenstein.

There's little to caviar in Ewald Osers's fluent translation from the Czech, except perhaps that word "arts". Iva is a cabaret artist, married to a musician; she's there because she has been caught up by male fantasy to be enjoyed *à la Saul Bowles*; to appeal to David, his wife surely needed instruction in show business.

G. P. Butler

SESTER GRASS  
The Rat  
Translated by Ralph Manheim  
58pp. Secker and Warburg. £12.95.  
0456107728

Though less peccable than perhaps most literary translators, Ralph Manheim could, in the case of *Die Rätin* (reviewed in the *TLS* of April 4, 1986) as of so much Grass down the line, have done better. It's not the American "jello", "movies", "broads" (= women), though they may be thought over-prominent in his new English surroundings ("honour", "practice", "programme"); it's not the occa-

sional infelicities ("four knots an hour" is Grass's fault, but "balneary visits" and "partial pilosity" are not); and the odd slip of the pen or the proof-reader ("ivory" for "ebony", "handless" for "landless", "politicians" for "police") is only to be expected. The principal flaw of *The Rat*, as translation, derives from what was presumably a policy decision: to shield the anglophone public from the full impact of Grass's wordy ways. The result is a text which, for all its many strengths, may mislead. Manheim at his best is strikingly skilful, and it is hard to imagine what it was that persuaded him, or Secker, to take the clippers to *Die Rätin*. There is nothing peculiarly problematical about the clippings: they are small bits and pieces of a big, bitty novel. As such they belong where the author put them.

## Exploiters and deprived

J. J. White

HANS CHRISTOPH BUCH  
The Wrecking at Port-au-Prince  
Translated by Ralph Manheim  
250pp. Faber. £10.95.  
0190104826

Peopled with an array of flamboyant characters and speckled with colourful incidents, *The Wrecking at Port-au-Prince* (the German original in which was reviewed in the *TLS* of 20 July, 1984) is a tribute to Haiti. Not the Haiti of the 19th century, but the Haiti of the 20th, and later, German and American alike. Assuming the form of a historical novel, the novel illustrates the "wedding" of Europeans and Haitians, exploiters and exploited, above all between white and black.

The action is an account of the French attempt to put down the black republic of 1804 and "restore the tested

colonial regime". The second, epistolary section documents the diplomatic storm-in-a-tent over the misdemeanours of a resident German national, Emil Lüders, which eventually led to Germany's sending a gunboat to humiliate the Republic in 1897 (an episode which would be pure comic opera, were we not repeatedly reminded of previous Napoleonic excesses and the later racism of the Third Reich). By way of compensation, the novel concludes on a more personal note with recollections of Hans Christoph Buch's own family's happier encounters with Haiti.

Readers of the English version are, however, denied the benefit of the appendix supplying historical notes and a glossary of local terms. Extracts from German press reactions to the Lüders Affair have been abridged or substituted; and there are a number of further omissions, especially in the middle section.

Ralph Manheim's translation displays that mixture of fluency, verve and the occasional looseness that one has come to expect from the doyen of modern German fiction translators.

## The ephemerality of translation

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statements it is intrinsically provisional, corrigible and replaceable. Within this diachronic perspective, the translator's primary function is no longer mimetic but analytic. Translations proliferate because no analysis can be either definitive or comprehensive. A translation of the *Aeneid* is not an evocative resuscitation of Virgil but a reading of Virgil. And even if it can be argued that a translation of *Das Kapital* is *eo ipso* a propagation of Marx's views, it can only be so in virtue of providing an interpretation of Marx's thought. The common factor in both cases is the diagnostic undertaking of the translator.

This move from a mimetic to an analytic concept has its parallel in other forms of modern art, particularly in the visual arts. The question "Why yet another translation?" (when understood as implying "What was wrong with the old one?") becomes as silly as asking "Why another portrait of the Queen?" or "Why another photograph of the Taj Mahal?" (when understood as implying "Don't we already know what they look like?") By the same token, to praise translators for their skill in copying the original becomes as silly as praising the portrait because it resembles the Queen or the photograph because it looks so much like the Taj Mahal.

The translator may still, to be sure, take

infinite pains to capture certain details of the original, just as the painter or photographer may concentrate on certain visual features of their subjects. But this is no longer simulation *per se*. The criteria of excellence are not simulational criteria. A bad translation is not bad because the analysis it offers requires us to see the original in an unusual, fragmented or controversial way. Errors of representation are not the ground on which to condemn a twentieth-century translator. Rather, the translator's worst possible fault, like the painter's and the photographer's, is now seen as that representational automatism which fails to present any structurally coherent analysis at all.

Last but not least, giving due recognition to the ephemerality of translation does not consign the great translations of the past to the dusty vaults of any museum of culture. On the contrary, it opens up those translations to new readings. It enables us to see, for example, how Pope's translation of the *Iliad* has dated much more than the English poetry which Pope wrote in translating it; and to explain why, by contrast, Wyatt's translations of Petrarch sound so modern, in spite of their sixteenth-century phraseology. In short, it enables us to draw the critical distinction between the translation and the translator's language at the point where it should in the end be drawn.



A detail from a poster for the 1920s small-circulation Paris evening paper *L'Intransigeant* is reproduced from *The Age of Utopia: Art and politics in France, 1918-1940* by Douglas and Madeleine Johnson (160pp, with 284 illustrations. Thames and Hudson. £14.50. 0 500 01404 3).

## A French malaise

David Coward

JEAN-DENIS BREDIN  
The Affair: The case of Alfred Dreyfus  
Translated by Jeffrey Mehlman  
628pp. Sidgwick and Jackson. £20.  
0283 994436

The Case lasted twelve years, from the accusation of treason levelled at Dreyfus in 1894 to his rehabilitation in 1906. But the Affair which engulfed it unleashed a bitter political struggle between conservatism and liberalism and polarized opinion to an alarming degree. The outcome is generally regarded as a victory for progress which allowed France to step boldly into the twentieth century as a mature, modern State. This view, however, fails to explain why, in François Mauriac's family, chamber-pots were known as "zolas", or why Jean Richépin's stage version of the events was closed by right-wing hooligans in 1931, or why William

Dieterle's Hollywood life of Zola was banned in France in 1937, or why the Affair was not discussed on French radio and television until the 1970s, or why as recently as 1985 the Army objected to a proposal to erect a statue of Dreyfus in the courtyard of the École Militaire where he was cashiered in 1895. Jean-Denis Bredin's brilliant book, *The Affair*, described by the *TLS* (April 24, 1984) as "intelligent, honest and totally absorbing", not only tells a fascinating story but also argues intriguingly that the Affair, far from being a historic turning-point, was in reality an extreme manifestation of a deep-seated malaise which afflicts French public life in moments of crisis: "nationalist sentiment, the worship of hierarchies, the fear of foreigners and the hunger for security are permanent features of the French mentality". Widely and enthusiastically reviewed when it came out in 1983, Bredin's *Affair* makes a welcome reappearance in this brisk and buoyant translation, which also makes good another well-known French failing: it provides a much-needed index.

Compared with the 20,000 communards executed in one week in 1871 or the countless millions masterfully dispatched in our own accomplished century, the tally of 2,639 decapitations notched up by the Paris Revolutionary tribunals barely registers in history's bloodmeter. Horror there was, and terror and tumult. But the scale was human - was not the guillotine a most humane remover of heads? - and there was time for those who had failed to "justify their political existence" to compose both themselves and their last letters. In a sharp piece of social history, Olivier Blanc in his *Last Letters: Prisoners and prisoners of the French Revolution 1793-1794* (250pp, Deutsch, £9.95. 0 233 97959 X) follows them from their prisons to the scaffold. He also rescues 150 of

their dying missives which have mouldered, unsorted, in the archives for two centuries and, in so doing (as the review of the French edition in the *TLS* of March 1, 1985, noted), has finally answered their pleas to be remembered. A few jokes and some snarl, but most manage a quiet dignity as they settle their affairs and say their farewells. There are no Scarlet Pimpernel here nor Sidney Cartoons, merely a faint murmur of uncertain voices repeating the tediously inevitable platitudes of valediction. Even in this disappointingly routine translation, they can be heard whispering still, signalling the end of their world not with a bang or a whimper but in a dribble of affectingly stiff-backed banalities.

D.C.



# TLS Listings

A comprehensive weekly selection of new and forthcoming books received by the TLS

The TLS Listings provides full publication details of those books received each week by the TLS which seem to fall within the main interests of our readers. Children's books, foreign-language books and paperback reprints of recent works are not, however, included. Publishers are asked to ensure that they let us have all the necessary information, including price and publication date.

## Anthropology

Amis, Mohamed, and Duncan Willetts, photographers; and John James The Last of the Minutai. *Body Head*. 198pp. plates. £22.50. 0 370 31097 7. 1987.

## Archaeology

Barry, T. B. The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland. *Medieval*. 234pp. illus. £25. 0 416 30609 9. 1987.

## Architecture

Crosby, Sumner McKnight; edited and completed by Pamela Z. Blum The Royal Abbey of Saint-Denis: from its Beginnings to the Death of Suger. 475-1151. *Vale UP*. 525pp. illus. £45.00. 0 300 03411 2. 25/87.

O'Gorman, James F. H. H. Richardson: Architectural forms for an American society. *Chicago UP*. 171pp. £19.95. 0 226 02609 7. 8/87.

## Art

The Illustrator's Figure Reference Manual. *Reynolds*. Plates. £14.95. 0 7425 0408 8. 27/87.

Derrida, Jacques; translated by Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod The Truth in Painting. *Chicago UP*. 306pp. illus. £49.95 (hardcover), £15.95 (paperback). 0 226 14323 0 (h.c.), 0 226 14324 1 (pb). 16/87.

Hadfield, John Victorian Delights: Reflections of taste in the 19th century. *Herbert*. 128pp. plates. £12.95. 0 96969 65 9. 3/87.

Levey, Michael The National Gallery Collection. *National Gallery*. 250pp. plates. £14.95 (hardcover), £9.95 (paperback). 0 947615 34 9 (h.c.), 0 947615 10 1 (pb). 2/87.

Levinson, Orde John Piper: The complete graphic works: A catalogue raisonné 1923-1983. *Faber*. 141pp. illus. £40. 0 571 14990 1. 29/87.

Mahsun, Carol Anne Pop Art and the Critics (Studies in Fine Arts: Criticism, 23). *Am Arbor, MI: UMI*. 146pp. illus. \$45.95. 0 8557 1509 1.



## Gliterary prizes

Like gamekeepers fattening birds for the shooting season, Britain's top publishing houses stuff their autumn lists with Booker Prize nominees. Starting next week on *The Times* books page, Victoria Glendinning examines the contenders — including the quartet depicted above: J.G. Ballard, Iris Murdoch, Ian McEwan and Peter Ackroyd.

**THE TIMES**  
The world's most famous newspaper (25p)

Skappa, Douglas River of Light: Monet's impressions of the Seine. *Gollancz*. 154pp. plates. £14.95. 0 575 01901 5. 17/87.

Taylor, Joshua C., editor 19th-Century Theories of Art. *California UP*. 563pp. illus. \$38.50 (hardcover), \$12.50 (paperback). 0 520 04688 1 (pb). 27/87.

**Biography, letters and diaries**

Renison, Saul, A. Clifford Barger and Elin L. Wolfe Walter B. Cannon: The life and times of a young scientist. *Harvard UP*. 520pp. 0 674 94580 8.

Carlyle, Thomas, and Jane Welsh; edited by Clyde de L. Ryals and Kenneth J. Fielding The Collected Letters, vol 13. *Durham, NC: Duke UP*. 333pp. £15.65. 0 8223 0702 2. 5/87.

Carlyle, Thomas, and Jane Welsh; edited by Clyde de L. Ryals and Kenneth J. Fielding The Collected Letters, vol 14. *Durham, NC: Duke UP*. 249pp. £15.65. 0 8223 0703 0. 5/87.

Carlyle, Thomas, and Jane Welsh; edited by Clyde de L. Ryals and Kenneth J. Fielding The Collected Letters, vol 15. *Durham, NC: Duke UP*. 293pp. £15.65. 0 8223 0704 9. 5/87.

Crawford, Robert D. Perin and the Enigmas of Argentina. *Norwich*. 412pp. illus. £16.95/£26.25. 0 303 02381 8. 9/87.

Davis, Bette, with Michael Herskowitz This 'N' That: A memoir. *Sidgwick and Jackson*. 207pp. illus. £12.95. 0 281 90510 8. 7/87.

Deppermann, Klaus; translated by Malcolm Wren Michael Hoffman: Social unrest and utopian visions in the age of Reformations. *Edinburgh: Clark*. 412pp. illus. £24.95. 0 567 09338 7. 5/87.

Dowden, Wilfred S., editor The Journal of Thomas Moore, vol 3: 1826-1830. *Associated University Presses*. 1,360pp. £19.95. 0 87411 255 X. 17/87.

Dowden, Wilfred S., editor The Journal of Thomas Moore, vol 4: 1831-1835. *Associated University Presses*. 1,780pp. £42. 0 87411 256 X. 17/87.

Hanna, S. S. The Gypsy Scholar: A writer's comic search for a publisher. *Ames: Iowa State UP*. 153pp. £15.95. 0 8138 1351 4. 17/87.

Tharris, Kenneth David Owen: Personally speaking. *Weidenfeld and Nicolson*. 248pp. illus. £12.95. 0 297 79260 7. 19/87.

**Business**

Macnab, Roy Gold The Touchstone: Gold fields of South Africa 1887-1987, a centenary story. *Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball*. 312pp. illus. 0 86850 140 9.

**Classics**

Homer; translated by Martin Hammond The Iliad: A new prose translation (Penguin Classics). *Penguin*. 406pp. £2.95 (paperback). 0 14 04444 0. 27/87.

King, Katherine Callen Achilles: Paradigms of the war hero from Homer to the Middle Ages. *California UP*. 335pp. illus. \$38. 0 520 05571 3. 10/87.

Myrslades, Kostas, editor Approaches to Teaching Homer's "Iliad" and "Odyssey". *New York: Modern Language Association of America*. 150pp. \$30 (hardcover), \$16.50 (paperback). 0 87352 499 3 (h.c.), 0 87352 500 0 (pb). 5/87.

**Economics**

Borner, Silvio, and Alwyn Taylor, editors Structural Change, Economic Interdependence and World Development, vol 2: Natural and Financial Resources for Development. *Macmillan*. 477pp. £47.50. 0 333 42845 5. 13/87.

Milward, Alan S. War Economy and Society 1939-1945 (1st pub 1977). *Penguin*. 395pp. £5.95 (paperback). 1 14 022682 6. 27/87.

Urguird, Victor L., editor Structural Change, Economic Interdependence and World Development, vol 1: Basic Issues. *Macmillan*. 224pp. £35. 0 333 42351 8. 17/87.

**Fiction**

Ballard, J. G. The Day of Creation. *Gollancz*. 254pp. £10.95. 0 575 04152 8. 10/87.

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